

In Gandhi's Footsteps:
The Gandhi Peace Awards
1960-1996

by James Van Pelt

for

PROMOTING ENDURING PEACE

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Promoting Enduring Peace

Gandhi Peace Award Recipients 1960-1996

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Introduction

The Gandhi Peace Award: it is a certificate, calligraphed with an inscription summing up the work for peace of a distinguished citizen of the world. It is a medallion featuring the profile of Mohandas Kaharamchand Gandhi, with his words “Love Ever Suffers / Never Revenges Itself” cast in bronze. It is a name plate on a weighty carved statue of the Mahatma. It is a ceremony held approximately once a year, at which a distinguished peacemaker is recognized and given the opportunity to present a message of challenge and hope. It is to be awarded annually “for contributions made in the promoting of international peace and good will.”

It has been received by the likes of Eleanor Roosevelt, Benjamin Spock, and César Chávez. Martin Luther King, Jr., was chosen but had to pass when he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace a few months later. Three other times the Nobel Committee seemed to follow P.E.P.’s lead, choosing to bestow the Peace Prize on



Mohandas K. “Mahatma” Gandhi

someone who just a few months before had won the Gandhi Peace Award: Linus Pauling, Peter Benenson, and Bernard Lown. Daniel Berrigan first accepted then angrily refused it. Pete Seeger politely declined, suggesting that P.E.P. give the Award to someone equally deserving but less thoroughly “awarded”. U Thant politely accepted, after having turned down the Nobel Peace Prize a few years before.

In preparing this account I have been struck by my own ignorance, despite decades of peace work, about many of the outstanding personages who have received the Award. Even those I had heard of I found I knew little about in terms of their specific accomplishments and their particular strategies for peacemaking. In checking around, I was flabbergasted to find that very many of my friends, intelligent and well-read, knew virtually nothing about most of the recipients. I know that there are biographies about many of them, but they are rarely read, at least in my encounters at the local libraries. There are some other surveys of peacemakers, such as Peter Rinaldo's *Trying to Change the World* and Elizabeth Anne McGuinness's *People Waging Peace*, which are somewhat arbitrary selections of leading activists from a variety of fields.

This book is unique in being a survey of peacemakers selected not by me, but by peace activists contemporary with them, over the greater part of the history of the Cold War and beyond, representing an amazingly complete range of the varieties that peace activism has taken. In a sense it counters the usual TIME "Man of the Year" treatment of recent historical personages, which so frequently ignores great peacemakers. (In the midst of the phenomenal Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign in 1982, TIME chose for its "Man of the Year" not Freeze originator Randall Forsberg but the personal computer!)

Take a look at the schedule for the popular cable television network, The History Channel. What constitutes history? The schedule has the common answer: wars, battles, weapons, soldiers, and wartime leaders compose at least three-quarters of the programs offered—a reasonable guide to the impression today's television-oriented youth is gathering. But that is the "yang" of history, when humanity's worst instincts drive us toward destruction. The "yin" without which history would be overwhelmed in conflagration is the untold story—the years of patient, thoughtful, unwavering struggles to "give peace a chance".

The stories that follow are the stories of the best of humanity—the people who, in a better world, would have our authority and trust. It is time we learn to recognize them, and perhaps as well to become them.

James Van Delt

October 1996

Chapter One

1960: Beginning a P.E.P. Tradition— Eleanor Roosevelt & Edwin Dahlberg

Like all of the perennial activities of Promoting Enduring Peace (P.E.P.), the Gandhi Peace Award was conceived by the organization's founder, Jerome Davis, possibly as early as the late nineteen forties. At the Board of Directors meeting on March 13, 1959, he formally proposed that a yearly award be given to persons outstanding in their work for world peace. In his view, the recipient need not be a pacifist. Each recipient's name would be inscribed on a permanent trophy and each would receive a citation. The Board approved the idea.

At the next meeting that year, on September 24, Board member Rabbi Eugene J. Lipman volunteered to secure a suitable trophy for what would be known as the Gandhi Peace Award, an offer that was accepted "with deep gratitude." Dr. Davis, as Executive Director, ordered a stock of one hundred heavy bronze medallions to be presented to the recipients. Dr. Davis was known to be an unusually parsimonious person, who would rather tear two sheets of paper together than consume a paper clip; the size of his medallion order expressed his faith in the continuity of his organization and the Award—and undoubtedly took advantage of quantity pricing.

Rabbi Lipman commissioned a famous New York sculptor named Don Benaron—who later used his given name, Don Katz—to create a work of art to serve as the symbol of the Award. Mr. Katz researched Gandhi at the library of India House in New York City and by 1960 had carved a striking portrait of the founder of the century's international movement for non-violent change. In 1985 he wrote, "I have been wondering what became of the statue. I was delighted to learn that it was in good condition and being used for a good cause. ... I think the wood used is mahogany. I carved the Gujarati word for *peace* on one side, and on the other a symbolic plowshare and pruninghook—inspired by Isaiah 2:4": *They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*

The Board nominated four well-known figures in connection with world peace: Dr. Edwin T. Dahlberg, Frederick Nolde, Eleanor Roosevelt, and James Paul Warburg. After some discussion, they selected the first two recipients of what was intended to be a new award of international significance: Eleanor Roosevelt and Edwin Dahlberg. Both were residents of New York City, then the center of much of P.E.P.'s public activities, so their attendance at an awards presentation posed no problems of travel.

It was the end of the Eisenhower era, a time when a forthright stand for international peace might mean a brand of disloyalty. The first presentation of the Award was scheduled to be made at the height of the Kennedy-Nixon Presidential campaign, which would define the onset of the new decade. The atmosphere would be charged with politics, with the sense of new possibilities attendant to the beginning of a new decade, and with the hope that the new President might be more representative of the liberal values shared by most of the individuals whose names were listed as the national Board on the stationery of Promoting Enduring Peace.

Eleanor Roosevelt

The better-known of the two initial recipients of the Award was one of the most prominent liberal Democratic leaders of the century: Eleanor Roosevelt, niece of one President and wife of another. By 1960, two years before her death at age 78, Mrs. Roosevelt had accomplished far more than most men of any rank or time. Even before her marriage to Franklin in 1905 she had been a dynamic social activist. Prior to becoming First Lady in 1932 she had raised five children, saved her husband from political oblivion after he was stricken with polio in 1921, continued her work for social betterment through numerous organizations, became a major influence in New York democratic politics, and served as Franklin's



Eleanor Roosevelt

very active partner during his terms as state assemblyman and Governor of New York.

Her causes prior to moving into the White House comprised the full list of liberal concerns: women's rights, civil rights for minorities, encouragement of youth organizations, improvements in housing and employment, and the promotion of consumer rights and social welfare programs. As First Lady she broke the mold of the woman behind the man: she was out front, a national leader, beginning with the first press conference ever held by the wife of a President, continuing with a nationally syndicated daily newspaper column and a regular radio program, and never letting up from tireless travels and speaking engagements throughout the country. The onset of World War II broadened her travels to include morale-boosting and fact-finding visits to far-flung theaters of the war—the South Pacific, Great Britain—as well as the Caribbean; and she also served as the very active assistant director of the nation's civil defense effort.

After the death of her husband, during the Truman years, she focused her energies on promoting the United Nations as the way for humanity to step toward a peaceful world, serving as a U.S. delegate to the U.N. During that period she also became chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights, part of the U.N.'s Economic and Social Council. In the 1950s she became a leader of the liberal wing of the national Democratic Party and a key force in the defeat of New York's Tammany organization and the subsequent reform of the city's political system. She wrote six books beginning in 1940 and continued her travels and speaking engagements throughout the nation and the world during the nineteen fifties.

Mrs. Roosevelt was not what one would normally think of as a leader of the peace movement. A P.E.P. pamphlet from the nineteen fifties compiled by Dr. Davis leads off with her answer to the question, "Is there any road toward peace?" She responds: "I would say yes—being strong militarily, economically, and spiritually no matter what sacrifices it entails." But her tireless work to establish the United Nations as a permanent alternative to armed conflict qualified her for the Gandhi Peace Award, in Jerome Davis's view; and from her life one might assume that she would have come to agree with P.E.P. that the obsession with military strength grew to undermine

America's economic and spiritual strength in ways that now seem to approach a terminal state.

The Award presentation was set for October 13 at the New York University Club. In the P.E.P. file for the 1960 Award are six very small typed notes on fine cream stationery that tell this part of the story, signed by Mrs. Roosevelt and enclosed in envelopes stamped with her personal frank, *Anne Eleanor Roosevelt*. They are a delight to encounter in P.E.P.'s dusty files. The first, dated September 21, 1960:

Dear Dr. Davis:

I am very sorry to have to write this note but I find something has come up which will make it impossible for me to get to you before 2:00 o'clock on October 13th. I do hope this will be still early enough for your purpose and that you will simply let me miss the luncheon. With deep regret for the inconvenience I am causing you, and the hope that you will understand. Very sincerely yours, Eleanor Roosevelt"

The second, dated September 27th:

You are very kind to let me come to you later on October 13th and I am deeply grateful. I will gladly say a few words on the subject of peace. Where is the luncheon being held?

The third, dated September 29th:

I will try to come to you on October 13 at 1:45 but I cannot promise to be on time. Unfortunately, the meeting which interferes with my arrival time is one that demands close personal attention, and if I could curtail it I would gladly do so.

The fourth, dated October 4th, contains the surprise:

From your correspondence, I did not realize that I was going to receive an award for peace. I am not a pacifist and I hardly think I qualify! I will try to be with you at 1:45 p.m., and I am very sorry for the inconvenience that is being caused you by my change of schedule.

The fifth, after receiving the Award, dated October 24th:

May I thank you most cordially for your kind letter and the certificate. I am deeply appreciative of your request to serve as an Honorary President for your organisation. As much as I would like to do so, I am sorry to say that I cannot take on any new activities. With many regrets...

The sixth, dated December 21st:

Thank you very much for your letter of December 14. You have my consent to delete whatever you think is necessary [from the text of her remarks at the Award presentation]¹. I am looking forward to receiving your leaflet and remain with all good wishes for Christmas and the New Year. Very sincerely yours, Eleanor Roosevelt”

(Lest Mrs. Roosevelt’s surprise over being the recipient of the Award, expressed so close to the date of the luncheon planned in her honor, imply that Dr. Davis had patched things together at the last minute, the 1960 file also contains a letter signed by Senator Hubert Humphrey dated five months earlier, addressed to Mrs. Jerome Davis. Dated July 25, 1960, it acknowledged her invitation “to be with you for the luncheon honoring Mrs. Roosevelt and Dr. Dahlberg on October 13th. Reverend Karl Baehr of the American Christian Palestine Committee [a member of P.E.P.’s Board of Directors] has also been in touch with me about the luncheon.” Senator Humphrey regretfully declined because of the press of Senate business and his grueling re-election campaign in Minnesota. Also in the file is the confirmation from the New York University Club for the room reservation, dated May 21, 1960, with a label stuck to it inscribed “Eleanor Roosevelt”.)

Mrs. Roosevelt over the years came to serve as the “anchor recipient” of the Gandhi Peace Award, always mentioned first not simply because she was first chronologically, but also because she appears to us, rightly, as one of the great world leaders of the century, and one of the very few both wholeheartedly devoted to pursuits springing from compassion and wholly free of ambition for personal gain. Her status as recipient of the Award and the life achievements that qualified her for it combined to define the august significance of the Gandhi Peace Award as much as the Award’s namesake and its many subsequent distinguished recipients. That Dr. Davis could reasonably count on her to accept the Award is an indication of his success in establishing the credentials of P.E.P. as a substantial organization with the broad support of important American moral leaders.

Edwin Dahlberg

One of those leaders was the other 1960 recipient: the Reverend Dr. Edwin T. Dahlberg, president of the National Council of Churches. He was to Jerome Davis an

¹ Comments in brackets are by the author.

appropriate choice because he was a practicing clergyman, a prominent leader dedicated to progressive action based upon liberal values, and a figure with national prominence and position who lent stature to the new Award. That was the approximate profile of nearly a third of the Award recipients over the years, and was in keeping with Dr. Davis's vision that P.E.P. should relate the established religions to the cause of international peace.

As head of the National Council of Churches (N.C.C.), Dr. Dahlberg represented over 38 million Protestant and Eastern Orthodox church members. He was both an evangelical Baptist minister and a leading advocate for liberal causes such as racial integration, economic justice, and the conversion of military expenditures to address the needs of the poor worldwide.

He was elected president of the N.C.C. in December 1957 at the height of the Cold War's most hysterical period, when U.S. leaders were encouraging Americans to prepare for nuclear war by digging bomb shelters and stocking food and medicine. Just a few months before, the Soviet Union had sent Sputnik, the first artificial satellite, into low Earth orbit, panicking Americans with the thought that they were falling behind the enemy's advanced technology and now lived beneath a piece of Soviet military hardware. In his inaugural address Dr. Dahlberg denounced the strategic military policy of the United States for its focus on massive retaliation against the Soviet Union and "mutually assured destruction", branding it "a feverish philosophy of bomb for bomb, rocket for rocket, Sputnik for Sputnik. ... It is far more important to send loaves of bread around the world [than satellites]." Rather than massive retaliation, "If we would be faithful to the express command of our Lord, the church's task must be one of massive reconciliation." He called on the U.S. and the other world powers to reduce armaments, increase economic aid to the poor nations, and undertake the "exchange of ideas and delegations across international lines." He could hardly have expressed the purposes of Promoting Enduring Peace more succinctly.

Humanity's first venture into outer space inspired Dr. Dahlberg to predict that space exploration would "so stir the human imagination that there will follow a great spiritual revival. ... [Today's] popular preoccupation with space will not weaken, but will heighten man's interest in things of the spirit." Accordingly he urged the church to

prepare for that interest by presenting an updated theology to the modern world. “Even children are asking theological questions as a result of the man-made satellites,” he asserted, “and our exploration of the incredible cosmic order opening up before us should result in a powerful awakening of religion.” Three years later a new President would call for Americans to walk on the moon by 1969, fueling the fascination with space Dr. Dahlberg anticipated; and a great surge of spiritual seeking did characterize the 1960s, though much of it was beyond the walls of the church.

Edwin Theodore Dahlberg was born in 1892 in Minnesota, son of Swedish Baptists. He had a newspaper route and a factory job while in high school, where he became valedictorian of his class at age 16. At the University of Minnesota he was active in Christian Endeavor Union church youth work, visited Europe at the height of its imperial period, and received his B.A. in 1914. He received his B.D. in Rochester, New York three years later and was ordained a Baptist minister in 1918. While working as secretary to Professor Walter Rauschenbusch, author of *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, he was inspired to apply Christian theology to the modern systems that perpetuated poverty and social strife. He received his doctor of divinity degree in 1939.

He began his ministerial career in 1918 as a missionary to the rural poor in the foothills of the Adirondacks and as pastor of churches in Potsdam and Buffalo, New York. He moved his ministry St. Paul, Minnesota, where he served from 1930 to 1939, then returned to New York, where he was the pastor of the leading Baptist church in Syracuse until 1950. Then he moved to Missouri to head the leading Baptist church there, with over 1,400 members, affiliated with both the American (i.e. Northern U.S.) Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention; he described it as a church with “a southern accent and a northern exposure”.

He became president of the American Baptist Home Mission Society and chairman of its evangelism committee before being elected to a two-year term as president of the American Baptist Convention in 1946. His international interests led him to be a leader of the Baptist World Alliance and the International Society of Christian Endeavor. He traveled to Holland in 1948 to help found the World Council of Churches (W.C.C.) and served on its central committee for six years, traveling as far as India. In 1950 he helped found the National Council of Churches and led its successful cam-

paign to open the hotels of St. Louis to travelers of all races. Seven years later he became the organization's president.

He co-authored *Christian Leadership in a World Society* and several other books for Christians, lectured on his mentor Rauchenbusch, was a trustee of four colleges and a ministerial insurance company. He and his wife Emilie Louise Loeffler met in college and had three children who grew up to become a minister, a minister's wife, and a religion professor. He had eight grandchildren. TIME reported in 1957 that he was a non-smoker and ardent enemy of alcohol.

Dr. Dahlberg loved the outdoor life. He scaled Colorado's tallest peaks and spent his vacations hiking, climbing, and boating. During every vacation he spent one entire night in solitary prayer, "in the Mojave desert, in the mountains, on the plains and by the sea. Three times I've spent a night of prayer in a rowboat on the Minnesota and Wisconsin lakes."

The First Award Ceremony: Jerome Davis's Call

In addition to remarks by Mrs. Roosevelt and Dr. Dahlberg, the program featured addresses by C.S. Jha, the ambassador of India to the United Nations; Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, retired pastor of New York's Riverside Church and one of the most prominent liberal religious figures of the day; Rabbi Maurice Eisendrath, the president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations; and Jerome Davis as founder and executive director of P.E.P. (Rabbi Eisendrath was himself the Award recipient the following year, and Dr. Davis received it six years after that.)

While the words spoken by Mrs. Roosevelt, Dr. Dahlberg, and the others that day are no longer in the files, the concluding remarks by Dr. Davis survive. These few words prophesy the admission of China to the United Nations, the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, the Peace Dividend controversy, the nuclear non-proliferation movement, the end of the draft, and other issues that are utterly contemporary. Since these remarks present a summation of the founder's view of P.E.P. and the cause of world peace at the end of P.E.P.'s founding era and at the organization's first truly national event, and since they are characteristically brief and to the point, demonstrating Dr. Davis's pragmatic "why not just" approach to changing the world, they seem worthy of reprinting in their entirety:

Our thinking here today has been that the building of peace is the most vital issue which faces America and the world. General Omar Bradley says, "The world has achieved brilliance without wisdom, power without conscience. Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants. We know more about war than we know about peace, more about killing than we know about living." The cataclysmic changes which have occurred in the past few years are breath-taking.

While we know that a concrete program for peace in these complex times is difficult, let us weigh carefully and prayerfully what steps can be taken.

First, strengthening the United Nations by having universal membership. This would mean that millions of the world's population in continental China would no longer be excluded from the responsibilities of adjusting to the rest of the world. The NEW YORK TIMES in an editorial this week pointed out that in the recent vote in the U.N. the tide is running irresistibly this way. Even Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Ireland all voted for her [China]. Both Senator Wayne and Senator Fulbright declared the admission of China to the U.N. is inevitable.²

Second, calling a moratorium on the Cold War. Supposing in the next six months we try to stop calling each other names and see if we cannot build friendship with one another even while we differ. Is this not more in line with our religious principles?

Third, we must move forward for world disarmament. Let us take the initiative and sincerely propose a detailed and realistic program considerate of the situation of other nations as well as our own.

Fourth, should our leaders not propose a concrete program for keeping up our economic prosperity when and if we discontinue our colossal armament spending?

Fifth, why can we not all agree to ban the use of chemical and biological warfare which can never be squared with moral and ethical principles?

Sixth, the announcement just made about a new, easy and cheap method of producing atomic bombs means most nations will have them unless they are outlawed now. Let us end once and forever nuclear bomb tests. The Russians have agreed to scientific stations on their territory manned by British and American experts. Everyone recognizes that this would enable us to detect all above-ground tests. If we agreed to this the Russians are willing to permit three inspec-

² Sen. Morse would receive the Award in 1970; Sen. Fulbright would pass one up in 1974.

tions yearly of any suspicious underground explosions anywhere. It seems now that perhaps we should conclude an agreement banning all tests.

Seventh, we must recognize that people all over the world are our brothers, no matter what their views. We have a responsibility to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and reduce the difference between those nations which have too little and those which have too much. We should have a massive policy of aid through the United Nations. America's economic and industrial power used through the United Nations could go a long way towards ending abject poverty, illiteracy, hunger and disease in Asia and Africa and elsewhere; and thus, with less danger of Communism working into those areas, make a safer world to live in.

Eighth, could we not establish a new governmental Peace Commission appointed by the President with the approval of the Senate and including all ex-Presidents, Governor Adlai Stevenson, Mrs. Roosevelt and one religious leader from each of the three major faiths?

Ninth, why not, as one step in this program, propose ending peacetime military conscription in all countries at once?

Tenth, a new Summit meeting should be called soon after our new President has been inaugurated. If you believe in this last proposal, would you consider writing a letter to the new President after the November election along the following lines:

Dear Mr. President,

We believe in this critical hour that the leaders of the Great Powers should meet together to work out an agreement on disarmament. We hope that you will use your great influence to make this possible. We understand that the Soviet Union has stated she will accept any form of controls provided there is agreement on complete disarmament. Since time is short and the fate of the world hangs in the balance, will you not take the leadership in calling a conference of the Great Powers?

Let each one of us take this positive action by writing some such letter. In America, where we pride ourselves on having a democracy, the question of whether we build peace or war depends on each citizen. How much time and money do you give for peace each year, as contrasted to your expenditures for travel, amusements and comforts?

Personally, as Executive Director of Promoting Enduring Peace, I take no salary and give my services besides contributing financially to the work. We have put out nearly five million leaflets and cards. Won't you contribute towards this work? There is a pledge card in the leaflets on "What We Can Do" which has

been distributed to each of you. Some of you may care to fill out the pledge card now and leave it on the table or place it on the plate where the free literature is. Let us redouble our efforts for peace. In this way we can genuinely promote peace and friendship around the world. Let us today act positively for good in the world. Let us show our appreciation of all that Mrs. Roosevelt and President Dahlberg have done for peace by increasing our own efforts both in time and in contributions for peace.

(The 1960 file contains a set of three-by-five cards, one for each reservation for the first Gandhi Peace Award luncheon. The cost was six dollars per person, equivalent to about \$25 in today's dollars. There were sixty-six reservations; overall attendance was nearly three times that number. Reservation #55 is for an official of the Rockefeller Foundation named Dean Rusk, who five years later was appointed Secretary of State by Lyndon Johnson, and who as such oversaw the foreign policy aspects of the Vietnam War.)

Chapter Two

1961: Establishing the Tradition—

Maurice Eisendrath & John Haynes Holmes

The following year the Board again selected two recipients, Rabbi Maurice Eisendrath, one of the keynote speakers at the first presentation, and the Rev. John Haynes Holmes, the retired minister and founder of the Community Church of New York City. The Award event was moved to that church, which became its permanent home for nearly twenty years.

A press release prepared by Gunther Lawrence, one of P.E.P.'s New York City supporters, described the organization as “a non-political, religious and educational organization. The group’s objectives are to stimulate an awareness of international issues and to foster public actions towards the establishment of world peace.”

The event was again a luncheon in October, and again it featured an address by Ambassador C.S. Jha of India. He was joined at the podium by Clarence E. Pickett of the American Friends Service Committee, and by the nation’s leading socialist thinker, Norman Thomas [GPA '67]³.

Maurice Eisendrath

Rabbi Eisendrath had headed the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, comprising over 600 Reformed temples throughout the Americas, with over a million members, for eighteen years. Two years before he had been chosen “Clergyman of the Year” by an interfaith committee. His special cause was a world summit meeting of the world’s religious leaders from all faiths, “to mobilize their spiritual forces on behalf of peace.” (Such a meeting was finally held in 1978.) He had recently enlisted Albert Schweitzer as the honorary chairman of the hoped-for convocation.

Rabbi Eisendrath’s contributions to world peace were often focused on bridging the terrible and often bloody gap between Christians and Jews. Beginning in Toronto, he had been a leading organizer of the National Council of Christians and Jews. He

³ GPA '67 means that he received the Gandhi Peace Award in 1967. This convention is maintained throughout the book as a way to illustrate the ties between Award recipients and the many organizations, including P.E.P., that have composed the peace movement since 1960.

was at the same time an outspoken social activist pressing for action on a range of liberal causes. Like the other recipients, his base was New York City.

John Haynes Holmes

Rev. Holmes started as the minister of New York City's Church of the Messiah in 1907 after being graduated from Harvard and the Harvard Divinity School. Twelve years later he led its conversion from Unitarianism to the non-denominational Community Church of New York and he served as its minister until his retirement in 1949. He was a dynamic speaker for the abolition of intolerance and war, and a founder of both the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. He wrote many books, including *A Sensible Man's View of Religion*, *The Affirmation of Immortality* (a reply to *The Illusion of Immortality* by Corliss Lamont [GPA '81]), and his well-received autobiography, which appeared two years before he received the Award.

He had a special connection with the Award's namesake, coming to know Gandhi as a friend while on an extended lecture tour in India from 1947 to 1948, during which time he also had numerous discussions with Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhi's successor as India's leader. These contacts were the source of Rev. Holmes's 1953 book, *My Gandhi*, which helped familiarize Westerners with the personal and spiritual qualities of Gandhi's teachings about the uses of non-violent action and the redemptive power of "unmerited suffering".

The passage of the decades enables us to see how insightful and prophetic this particular Award actually was. The transmission of Gandhi's ideas to the United States, we now know, was crucial to the development of the civil rights movement and the role of Martin Luther King, Jr. in that movement, which in turn served as the model for the modern feminist cause and other liberation movements, including the Farmworker movement of César Chávez [GPA '89].

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Chapter Three

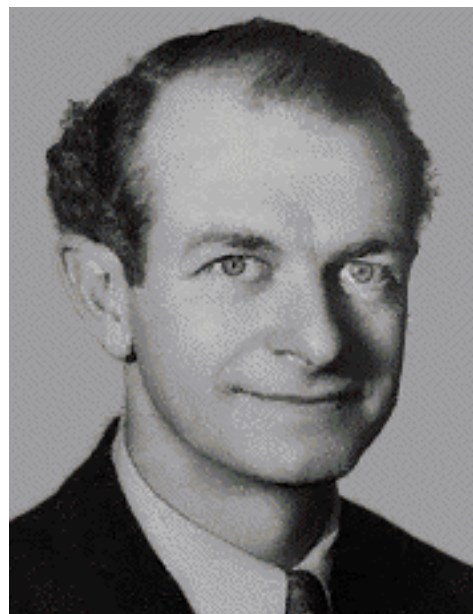
1962: Reaching Beyond New York— Linus Pauling & James Paul Warburg

The four recipients to date had been residents of “the City” and acquaintances of Jerome Davis; three had been liberal clergymen. The choices in 1962 of Linus Pauling and James Paul Warburg expanded the definition of the Gandhi Peace Award.

Linus Pauling

Linus Carl Pauling was a westerner by background: born in Oregon in 1901, the focus of his scientific career was the California Institute of Technology, where he received his chemistry doctorate and became a professor in 1931; he subsequently taught at Stanford. His first achievements combined chemistry with the emerging insights of quantum physics; then he went on to discoveries in microbiology, for which he won numerous prizes. Beginning in the nineteen thirties and growing into a consuming interest was his concern for world disarmament. In 1954 he won the Nobel Prize for chemistry.

In 1958 he published *No More War*, “a plea for international peace.” He lent the authority of science and the mind of an authentic American genius to the cause of finding alternatives to World War III. The persuasive powers of his thought and example were such that shortly after P.E.P. made its Award, the Nobel Prize committee made the same decision: Dr. Pauling became one of three Gandhi Peace Award recipients also



Linus C. Pauling
two-time Nobel Prize Winner

to receive the Nobel Prize for Peace, and at the same time the only person ever to have won two unshared Nobel Prizes in separate categories.

Jerome Davis had initiated another element of the Award’s tradition: a special citation to summarize the recipient’s contribution to peace. Over the years the Award

citations would rise to the level of minor masterworks of praise, but Dr. Davis's citations were simply award forms from a stationery store printed with wording for the P.E.P. Award. Each said "In recognition of the great humanitarian contribution of" with a space for the name, "to the cause of PEACE and understanding around the world..." Dr. Pauling's citation said:

*In recognition of the great humanitarian contribution of
Dr. Linus H. Pauling⁴
winner of the Nobel Prize and other awards for his scientific
achievements. His life has been constantly contributing
to the cause of PEACE and understanding around the
world. This award is presented
on this 1st day of November, 1962.
Promoting Enduring Peace, Inc.
Kirtley F. Mather, President*

Dr. Pauling continued his leadership for world peace in the years following, receiving the International Lenin Peace Prize (the Soviet equivalent of the Nobel Prize) for 1968-1969. (He also received awards from other Socialist-bloc countries, including a medal in 1966 named after him.) He also broke new ground in preventive medicine, championing the powers of megadoses of vitamin C to curtail the common cold and the use of chemotherapy to cure schizophrenia and other mental diseases.

He was one of two American Nobel Prize winners at a conference of seventy-one leading nuclear scientists from many countries including USSR held in Kitzbühel, Austria in 1958 who "agreed that setting up a reliable system of controls for international nuclear disarmament had become 'extremely difficult, perhaps impossible,' and that even though negotiation might eliminate such weapons, the knowledge of how to make them would be, 'for all time, a potential threat to mankind.'" [W.A. Swanberg]

In 1958 he joined Bertrand Russell, Norman Thomas [GPA '67], and others in filing suit to enjoin the United States from conducting any more nuclear weapons tests. Four years later he again joined Mr. Thomas and two hundred others in a petition to the Soviet government demanding an end to executions for "economic crimes". He was an initiator of the Stockholm Peace Petition and was harassed by the Internal Se-

⁴ The middle initial was wrong; his middle name was Carl.

curity committee of the U.S. Senate for his peace activities and contacts with representatives from Socialist-bloc peace organizations.

James Paul Warburg

The other choice for 1962 was also bold: James Paul Warburg, a man whose achievements were equally protean and whose advocacy for peace was equally respected. Mr. Warburg was German by birth, coming to the U.S. as an infant. He was another Harvard graduate. After a stint in World War I as a flyer in the Navy's rudimentary air corps, he established a distinguished career in business and industry, rising during the nineteen twenties and 'thirties to head several major New York banks and to serve on the boards of numerous companies including the Polaroid Corporation. Along the way he headed the board of the Julliard School of Music, among other service activities.

But like Dr. Pauling, he was not defined by one occupational category. He was foremost an author; while writing a whole list of business publications, he also had published three volumes of poetry and some political pamphlets warning the world of the approaching danger from the land of his birth. When World War II broke out he devoted his writing and organizational abilities to the nation's propaganda operation, becoming deputy director of the Overseas Branch of the U.S. Office of War Information and serving in London and Washington. Following the victory he proved the irony of his surname, focusing all his talents on promoting the policies of world peace and publishing such titles as *Last Call for Common Sense*, *Victory Without War*, *How to Co-Exist*, *Turning Point Toward Peace*, *Agenda for Action—Peace Through Disengagement*, and *The West in Crisis*. In 1962 he published *The Liberal Papers*, and two years later his autobiography, *The Long Road Home*.

He continued his prolific witness for peace until his death in 1969. His citation, paralleling Dr. Pauling's, reads:

*In Recognition Of The Great Humanitarian Contribution of
James P. Warburg.*

*His writing and lectures have been constantly contributing
to the cause of PEACE and understanding around the world.*

The Awards were presented on November 1, again at the Community Church of New York. Addresses were given by Dr. Pauling and Mr. Warburg, as well as by Ambassador Chakravarty of India and Dr. Harold Bosley of P.E.P.'s Board. This year began the tradition of offering free admission to the presentation, although a dollar was charged for a reception with the recipients.

Chapter Four

1963: A Single Recipient—E. Stanley Jones

P.E.P. had conferred the Gandhi Peace Award on six outstanding individuals in its first three years. In the next four years there would be only two additions to the list.

E. Stanley Jones

The 1963 Award went to Dr. Eli Stanley Jones, described in the program as “Preacher, Author, Worker for Peace.” Like John Haynes Holmes he had a vital connection to Gandhi the man. After receiving divinity degrees from Duke and Syracuse Universities he responded in 1907 to a calling to become a missionary. He spent the rest of his life as an evangelist ministering to the people of India, particularly to those from the highest castes. When, having been made a bishop in 1928, he found his position got in the way of his missionary work, he resigned to return to his original ministry. He founded Christian ashrams and a psychiatric center in northern India and worked toward the founding of such ashrams in the United States and in Europe.

In 1948, after Gandhi’s assassination, Dr. Jones published *The Way* and *Mahatma Gandhi: An Interpretation*. Both books drew inspiration from Gandhi’s assertion of the unity of humankind under one God and his integration of Christian, Muslim, and Hindu ethics within his philosophy of nonviolence. These two works led to a series of inspirational books and articles through the ’fifties and ’sixties including *The Way to Power and Poise*, *How to Become a Transformed Person*, and *Victory Through Surrender*. He spent his last years as a New York City resident and died in 1973.

His Award presentation, on November 7th, again featured an address by Ambassador Chakravarty of India. Speaking for P.E.P. was its president, Dr. Kirtley Mather, a Harvard professor and former president of the YMCAs of America. Also speaking for P.E.P. was a member of its advisory board, Dr. Ralph Sockman, minister emeritus of Christ Church Methodist in New York City. The program was enriched by music for the first time: selections by the Salem Methodist Church Chorus. Admission was free; there was no public reception.

Chapter Five

1965-66: *The Militant Preacher Pacifist—A.J. Muste*

There was no Award for 1964, but a recipient was selected. As the Board considered the nominees for the 1964 Award, great events were unfolding in civil rights. On June 15th of the previous year, the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., had delivered his immortal “I Have A Dream” speech, which he followed by intense lobbying for passage of the nation’s first civil rights law since Reconstruction. The Board overwhelmingly selected him to receive the 1964 Award. He agreed to come to New York to accept it in late 1964. Before a date could be arranged, the Nobel Prize Committee announced that he had been chosen to receive the 1964 Peace Prize. Given the intensity of attention that followed for Dr. King, on top of his already gargantuan schedule, and the difficulty in communicating with him as he moved from place to place, it was simply impossible to find a workable date within a period the Board found acceptable. As a result, no award was made in 1964, and Gandhi’s greatest living American exemplar did not become a recipient of the Gandhi Peace Award.

In September 1965 the Rev. Wallace Viets proposed that the Award be presented to Norman Thomas early the following year; if Mr. Thomas did not accept, the award would be offered to A.J. Muste. The Board accepted his motion. Mr. Thomas did defer his acceptance to the following year. In January the Board decided on Sen. Wayne Morris in addition to Rev. Muste, but the Senator also deferred. (Mr. Thomas was given the Award in 1967 and Sen. Morse in 1970.) A.J. Muste would be the sole recipient for 1966.

A.J. Muste

In 1963 Nat Hentoff published *Peace Agitator*, a generally sympathetic biography of the Rev. A.J. Muste, and the title said it all. Rev. Muste’s career took him far from the church sanctuaries and paneled offices of some of the other distinguished clergymen who had received the Award. Rev. Muste was an agitator, in the best sense, and a powerful example to anyone who wants to know what “speaking truth to power” real-

ly requires. His selection for the Award was another bold choice, expanding its scope to the very limits of radical pacifism.

As the National Observer put it in its May 2, 1996, account of the April 27th P.E.P. ceremony, "The Rev. A.J. Muste, a tall, spindly, white-haired man of 81, has been arrested for climbing over a barbed-wire fence into a U.S. missile base, beaten for leading a picket line of striking textile workers, and —most recently—pelted with eggs and tomatoes by irate Saigon youths. Last week he returned to his New York City home after leading a six-man pacifist group to South Vietnam to protest American involvement in the Vietnam war." They were arrested in Saigon by South Vietnamese police to prevent them from demonstrating in front of the U.S. Embassy and held until their visas expired at the end of the week. Rev. Muste returned in time to accept the Gandhi Peace Award.

Between the presentation of the Award to E. Stanley Jones in 1963 and A.J. Muste in 1966, great changes had begun to stress the nation. The President had been murdered; his successor had pressed wonderful legislation for civil rights and social progress through Congress, yet had also taken a few thousand advisors and conjured up a land war in Asia. The baby boom generation had just begun four years of college that would transform academia and change American culture. A.J. Muste was a perfect choice to bring on such a time.

Rev. Muste's ministry began in the first decade of the century, but it found a home a few years before World War I when an international pacifist group called the Fellowship of Reconciliation (F.O.R.) became active in the United States. As war broke out in Europe and revolution swept Russia, Rev. Muste was leading a striker's picket line at a Massachusetts textile mill, making practical use of F.O.R.'s principles of non-violent action. The police, maintaining no such principles, beat him and took him in for the first of his many stints in jail for his beliefs. Through the following two decades he alternated between labor movement leadership and service as the minister of churches of Reformed, Presbyterian, Congregational, and Quaker denominations. He organized strikes and marches and unions around the country as a leader of the Conference for Progressive Labor Activities, whose principles called for "a definitely anti-imperialist, anti-militarist, and internationalist labor movement." He struggled

through the Depression for adequate relief allotments for all, opposed the eviction of the poor, and pressured state and local governments on behalf of workers. He was a unique example to both religious and political activists, simultaneously a believer in God and a Trotskyite.

Leaving his church ministry, he became the executive secretary of F.O.R. in 1940. As part of his work he identified promising young leaders and brought them into positions of responsibility. (One was James Farmer, who in 1942 as race-relations chairman for the F.O.R. became a principal founder of the Congress of Racial Equality, one of the leading organizations of the civil rights movement in its early years.)

The NATIONAL OBSERVER commented, “Always a man of prodigious enthusiasm and stamina, even now he speaks in a firm voice though his hands tremble with age. A believer in action, he was one of the first radicals to insist that ‘you do your revolutionary job, and if that lands you in jail, fine. You never compromise or “chicken out” in order to keep out of jail.’”

A book of Rev. Muste’s essays was published shortly after he received the Award. In 1968 he achieved a pinnacle of influence when one of his sayings began appearing on posters, spontaneously and without attribution to him, on dorm room walls in colleges throughout North America. Rev. Muste’s saying expressed the realization dawning amidst all the resistance to the Vietnam War that true peace is a process that requires more than the mere cessation of war. The posters said simply:

There Is No Way To Peace. Peace Is The Way.

The 1966 Award Ceremony

The year was a milestone because of Dr. Davis’s announcement that he would retire as Executive Director as of July 1, 1967, at the age of seventy-six. He felt ready to yield day-to-day control of P.E.P. to his associate director, the Rev. Roy Pfaff. The younger man had proven himself to be systematic and detail-oriented in a way that complemented Dr. Davis’s “big picture” view of the organization, and industrious to the point of tirelessness in distributing peace literature through the mails. Now Rev. Pfaff, at Dr. Davis’s persistent urgings, implemented a plan to invite New York area peace activists to the 1967 Award presentation by using the mailing lists of the groups to which they belonged.

In brief, he developed a form letter that offered to provide stamped envelopes containing invitations to the event. The organization could simply address and mail them. That way the word got out and the organization need not disclose their membership list. The groups Rev. Pfaff contacted included the Committee for Non-Violent Action, Turn Towards Peace, the War Resisters League, the Jane Addams Peace Association, Clergy and Laymen Concerned, the American Friends Service Committee, the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, the Student Peace Union, Support in Action, SANE, the Congress of Racial Equality, the National Research Council on Peace Strategy, the World Without War Council, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Post-War World Council, the Council for Christian Social Action, the American Civil Liberties Union, the League for Industrial Democracy, Veterans for Peace in Vietnam, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and a number of liberal New York churches. This resulted in the mailing of several thousand invitations to people likely to want to attend the Award presentation, and the practice was carried on as long as the event took place in New York City. As a testimony to Rev. Muste's significance to the peace community, the attendance at the Award presentation was almost five hundred people.

Chapter Six

1967: Award Without Ceremony—Norman Thomas

The P.E.P. Board discussed nominating Norman Cousins, Dr. Harold Taylor, and Sen. William Fulbright at its April 1966 meeting. In September the names of Norman Thomas, Norman Cousins, and Harold Taylor were submitted to the full Board by mail as the candidates. P.E.P.'s records make no mention of the result, and there was no Award ceremony for any of them, but from then on Norman Thomas was listed as an Award recipient for that year. The June 1967 minutes do not mention Mr. Thomas, but note that another vote had been taken and that William Sloane Coffin, Jr., had been elected to receive the Award along with Jerome Davis.

Between these two events, Mr. Thomas at the age of eighty-three presumably became the only recipient to have been presented with the Award without a ceremony. He had become exceedingly frail, needing strenuous assistance just to make it to the podium for his speeches, though once there he spoke in a quavering but commanding voice. Consequently he canceled all but a few appearances that year. One he did not cancel was his final debate, when he took on Robert Welch of the John Birch Society before a packed house at the Yale Law School November 7th; perhaps he chose this event over the P.E.P. Award ceremony so that he could spread his few remaining appearances geographically. Three days later, a few hours after a speech in Chicago, he suffered the stroke that brought his public appearances to an end. He died in December of the following year.

Norman Thomas

Although there is almost nothing in the files of P.E.P. to document the Award to Norman Thomas, his remarkable life certainly qualified him for it. If Eleanor Roosevelt can be seen as the towering figure of liberal conscience in this century, Norman Thomas was her socialist counterpart. So central a progressive figure was he that his life virtually *is* the history of American socialism in the twentieth century. He was an advocate for many causes that seemed radical when he promoted them to the American public, yet are now integral elements of American life: the minimum wage; the

five-day work week; social security and medical insurance for the elderly; publicly financed low-income housing; legislation to abolish child labor, protect civil rights and promote racial integration... the list goes on and on. He opposed colonialism and imperialism from the time those systems ruled the world until they became, at least in their most blatant manifestations, extinct.

By the time he received the Award he had become a valued counselor to Presidents, and commentators of many persuasions the world over referred to him as "The Conscience of America." The year he received the Award, the *NEW YORK TIMES* said he was not indestructible, but indispensable. That so few progressives today have a clear idea of who he was and what he accomplished—and why he could not accomplish more—calls to mind Santayana's pronouncement: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

Outline of Norman Thomas's Life

Norman Mattoon Thomas, American Socialist party leader, clergyman, social reformer, and frequent candidate for political office, came to be called the "conscience of America". Born in 1884, he entered Union Theological Seminary in New York City in 1911 and became a Presbyterian clergyman. That same year he became pastor of the East Harlem Presbyterian Church in New York City. There and in the nearby settlement house he helped to run, his encounter with raw poverty inspired him to embrace the Social Gospel taught at Union. By 1918 he had determined that charitable programs could not erase the inequality, waste, exploitation, and poverty that blighted the nation, because such problems were the necessary consequence of the workings of the capitalist system, so he became an active socialist. Also a pacifist, he opposed the entrance of the United States into World War I.

He resigned his ministry that year to devote himself to effecting radical political change, founding *THE WORLD TOMORROW*, the magazine of the pacifist Fellowship of Reconciliation, and serving as its editor until 1921, when he became associate editor of *THE NATION* until the following year. (He formally resigned from the Presbyterian clergy in 1931 and became an agnostic.) In 1920, with Jane Addams, Roger Baldwin, John Haynes Holmes [GPA '61], and others, he founded the American Civil Liberties Union (A.C.L.U.) as a nonpartisan organization devoted to protecting individual

rights, especially the uncensored expression of opinion, equality before the law, and due process; since then the A.C.L.U. has argued or supported nearly every major civil liberties case in the nation. From 1922 to 1935 he was co-director of the League for Industrial Democracy, an offshoot of the American Socialist Party, which advocated industrial production planned for equitable and abundant consumption rather than profit for the elite.

After the death of Eugene Debs in 1926, and for the following two generations, Mr. Thomas was regarded as the leading member of the American Socialist Party. He ran for governor of New York in 1924, for mayor of New York City in 1925 and 1929, for alderman there in 1926, and for President of the United States six consecutive times from 1928 to 1948. His vote tally increased in 1928 and reached its peak of 881,951 in the 1932 election, then declined steadily in following elections until his last one in 1948. His opposition to U.S. entry into World War II until the attack on Pearl Harbor and his refusal to have any truck with the New Deal severely damaged the political base he began with. That base was further eroded by sabotage from Communist infiltrators and by the unmitigated opposition of the capitalist power structure he pledged to overturn.

Although he won no local, state or national offices, he helped make it politically possible—and necessary—for the ruling parties to enact the social programs he advocated and contributed greatly to the establishment of the ideal of individual rights that came to prevail. His long and tireless political career, during which he addressed hundreds of audiences each year and reached millions more via radio speeches, syndicated newspaper columns, and magazine articles, saw the enactment of measures he first popularized such as unemployment insurance, low-cost public housing, the five-day work week, minimum wage laws, and the abolition of child labor. Throughout his life he battled the influence of Soviet Communism, while at the same time standing against the oppressive forms of anti-Communism epitomized by McCarthyism.

After World War II he gradually withdrew from active Party leadership, founding and chairing the non-partisan Post War World Council and guiding it toward effective opposition to militarism, nuclear weapons, and the brinkmanship and imperialism that he felt characterized the foreign policies of both sides in the Cold War.

Amidst his tornado of a schedule Mr. Thomas managed to author hundreds of pamphlets, uncounted letters to the editor, and more than 20 books, the best-known of which are *The Choice Before Us* (1934); *War—No Profit, No Glory, No Need* (1935); *A Socialist's Faith* (1951); *The Test of Freedom* (1954); *The Great Dissenters* (1961); *Socialism Re-Examined* (1962); and the posthumously published *The Choices* (1969) and *What Are the Answers?* (1970). Many consider *The Prerequisites for Peace* (1960) his most important book “in the sense that it concerned issues and programs he deemed essential to saving man from self-destruction. ...[It] gave a striking portrayal of a national state of mind at once materialistic and suicidal. Mr. Thomas insisted that disarmament...was still politically possible and with skillful management would usher in a world of great prosperity and serenity. To do so it was necessary to persuade the people that the armaments gravy train was en route to catastrophe.”⁵

By 1967, the year he received the Award, he had gradually reduced his public appearances to a strategic few. A stroke in November of that year ended his appearances (but not his public pronouncements and writing), and he died in a Huntington, New York, nursing home on December 19, 1968.

The Archetypal Gandhi Peace Award Recipient

Because his adult life coincided with the first seven decades of the century, and because he was so crucial to the American movement for peace and social justice through two world wars and several social revolutions, he is in some ways the archetypal Gandhi Peace Award recipient. Like so many other Award recipients, he had been an influential liberal Protestant clergyman based in New York City. This and his strong early pacifism connected him to many others in the circle of P.E.P., including Donald Harrington, a Socialist admirer of Mr. Thomas and minister of the Community Church where most Award ceremonies were held; Eleanor Roosevelt (the first GPA recipient in 1960, the year before she served as co-chair of Mr. Thomas's seventy-fifth birthday celebration); John Haynes Holmes [GPA '61], a leading Socialist and Harrington's predecessor at the Community Church; Maurice Eisendrath [GPA '61]; James Paul Warburg [GPA '62]; Linus Pauling [GPA '62]; E. Stanley Jones [GPA '63]; A.J.

⁵ W.A. Swanberg, *Norman Thomas*

Muste [GPA '66]; William Sloane Coffin, Jr. [GPA '67], whose uncle Henry Sloane Coffin had officiated at Mr. Thomas's marriage in 1910 and later headed Union Theological Seminary; Corliss Lamont [GPA '81]; and of course Jerome Davis [GPA '67]. Rev. Coffin and Mr. Thomas had worked together in 1964 on several efforts to gain U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam. Mr. Thomas and Rev. Muste remained comrades in arms through their whole lives, despite disagreements from time to time over the proper application of pacifism. Howard Frazier, P.E.P.'s current executive director, met Mr. Thomas as a young man in 1934 when he was invited to Mr. Thomas's summer cottage for a program for progressive students.

The story of Norman Thomas presents the prologue for the world in which P.E.P. came to life in the 'fifties and 'sixties. His career can be divided into five important stages. The first was his stunning transformation from Midwestern Republican fundamentalist to New York-based liberal Christian crusader in the first two decades of the century. The second was his evolution from liberal clergyman to agnostic socialist, culminating in his assumption of the leadership of American socialism in the 1920s following the death of Eugene Debs. Third was his series of campaigns for the Presidency of the United States and other high offices from 1924 to 1948. Fourth was his leadership of the American Socialist Party as it endured its defining crisis of identity in the late 1930s and '40s. The final stage was his accession to the role of elder statesman and counselor to the American political scene during the period that coincides with the life of P.E.P. until 1968, during which time he waged tireless struggles for anti-imperialism, universal disarmament, and human rights.

From Republican Fundamentalist to Socialist Crusader

Like so many other Award recipients, Mr. Thomas began his career as a liberal Protestant minister in New York City. He was the son and grandson of sternly orthodox Presbyterian ministers (and Republicans), and raised in the fast-growing farming and manufacturing town of Marion, Ohio that was also the birthplace of Warren G. Harding. His family moved east, where he completed his schooling, and Norman was admitted to Princeton, where his father and grandfather had attended seminary. He made straight A's and led his class as Valedictorian, while active on the debate team, orchestra, and chorus. He was known to be rather conservative and uninterested in

economics; he titled one term paper "Why Socialism Ain't So". He was elected to Princeton's elite Colonial Club and cast his first vote in 1908 for William Howard Taft. The professor who was his model in oratory was none other than Woodrow Wilson.

Desiring to follow the family tradition into the Presbyterian ministry after graduation, he took a position at a church and settlement house (a cross between a homeless shelter and a community center) in New York City before entering seminary. The effect on Mr. Thomas of encountering massive poverty first-hand was tremendous. Graduated from Princeton with thoughts of writing the definitive refutation of "socialism in favor of capitalism," within a few years he was questioning the causes of the suffering and the efficacy of symptomatic treatments: "...our various reform efforts were... like bailing out the tub while we kept the faucet running." He accompanied the church's minister on a trip to Asia and recoiled, from a basic sense of justice, at the thoughtless arrogance of colonialism in China and India.

In 1908, at the age of twenty-four, he enrolled in New York's Union Theological Seminary, center of the Social Gospel movement. There his childhood outlook was challenged by the message of Social Christianity, which forcefully argued that the teachings of Jesus Christ were simply incompatible with materialistic, self-centered capitalism. He affiliated with the fashionable mid-town Brick Church that supported a mission church downtown on the outskirts of Hell's Kitchen, spending most of his time in service to the poor. He gave his first sermon at Brick Church, in which he quoted Napoleon's words approving of the church's traditional focus on the afterlife: "Society cannot exist save with inequality of fortune, [which] cannot be supported without religion. When a man dies of hunger by the side of another who is gorged, he cannot accept that disparity without some authority shall say to him: 'I have decreed it thus; there must be rich and poor in the world; but in the hereafter and for all eternity it will be the other way about.'"

There met his future wife, Violet Stewart, who was both an activist in Christian social service and daughter of the co-founder of the financial behemoth known as the United States Trust Company. Her resources provided them a modest income that

freed Mr. Thomas thenceforth from the necessity to scrape up a livelihood (which would be supplemented in future years by his speaking fees and book royalties).

Ordained in 1911, he became pastor of the East Harlem Presbyterian Church and confronted the larger implications of the slum conditions he encountered there “among these people of many races who have made their homes, or what must pass for homes, here in our city,” he wrote. “Tragedy and comedy, sordid misery... and high hope, brave living and real success are strangely mingled... What is our democracy worth? How shall we make it apply to our social, industrial, and political problems?”

Assuming the Mantle of Socialist Leadership

In the second stage of his career, the approach of World War I induced Mr. Thomas to apply the logic of Social Christianity to geopolitics, which split his family down the middle. The struggle appeared increasingly to him as “an immoral struggle between rival imperialisms.” By 1917 he had joined the radical pacifist Fellowship of Reconciliation (F.O.R.). Two of his brothers went off to war; the third, Evan, declared his complete disillusionment with “this wretched social order”, and as an ardent pacifist went to prison and later became chairman of the War Resisters League (on whose board was A.J. Muste [GPA '66]).⁶

The power of Evan’s example along with Norman’s association with F.O.R. and his developing certainty about the social implications of his religious convictions led him into a confirmed life-long radicalism and a growing disenchantment with the church, of which he wrote, “Even in war the church ought to stand for a form of society transcending nationalism and national boundaries,” abjuring those who would “make the church a handmaiden of nationalism [in which] very act she abdicates her highest claims upon humanity.” He saw a church that “ignores, tolerates, or at best, only here and there openly fights conditions which warp and twist the lives of men and women and little children. ... The church must live and teach as the constant witness to Christ, the Savior of the individual and the regenerator of society. The two

⁶ Evan Thomas also became a world-renown professor of medicine.

tasks cannot be separated but must be forever united as in Jesus' conception of the Kingdom."

His adherence to pacifism, wrote biographer Murray Seidler, "made him one of a small minority of American Protestant ministers who refused to sanction the war even after the United States had become officially involved." Mr. Thomas wrote:

"The doctrine that there is a national conscience which must always be superior to individual conscience is the death of any vital religion and of any real sense of human brotherhood. ... It is, to be sure, my duty to seek all possible light from every source, but having done that I must follow conscience."

The important political force of the time that was still opposing the war while advocating fundamental social and economic change was the American Socialist Party. Its candidate, Morris Hillquit, entered the 1917 New York City mayoral campaign and made the war itself the primary issue. Mr. Thomas, calling for "the abolition of the capitalist system" as the true cause of the Great War, endorsed Hillquit's forthright anti-war position, which he attacked "a pursuit of democracy which has the support of the men and the classes who habitually rob and despoil the people of America... Not warfare and terrorism, but Socialism and social justice will make the world safe for democracy."

That year he became a leader of the American Union Against Militarism (A.U.M) and testified as its spokesman to Congress. Soon afterward he likewise became a leader of F.O.R. and founded *The World Tomorrow*, its official magazine, which he would edit for the next three years. And he founded a division of the A.U.M. called the Civil Liberties Bureau to defend those who refused to register for the draft; two years later it would become an independent entity known as the American Civil Liberties Union—the A.C.L.U.

In 1918 he resigned his church position, out of his altered convictions and a sense that his outspoken beliefs were costing the church outside financial support. His faith was evolving away from his earlier belief in "a God who is love and at the same time omnipotent," he wrote in 1922. "...I can easily walk in humility and awe in our marvelous universe. I am inclined to find design in it. But not that perfection of creation or that loving care for each of us as individuals which I crave and which I once found in Christian doctrine." (Over thirty years later he confessed, "I am no atheist. Indeed I

am almost haunted by religion and often wish that I could regain the comfortable Christian theology of earlier years.”)

Later that year he crossed a great line from one life affiliation to another: overcoming great internal resistance, he became a member of the American Socialist Party. On his application for Party membership he wrote, “...these are days when radicals ought to stand up and be counted. I believe in the necessity of establishing a cooperative commonwealth and the abolition of our present unjust economic institutions and class distinctions based thereon.” (The phrase “cooperative commonwealth” was a defining catch-phrase associated with American socialism and its spiritual leader, Eugene Debs.)

“There was no great moment of any kind,” he wrote of his decision to become a Socialist Party member. Mr. Thomas’s resistance was rooted in his “profound fear of the undue exaltation of the State,” as he explained in his application, “and a profound faith that the new world must depend upon freedom and fellowship rather than upon any sort of coercion whatsoever. I am interested in political parties only to the extent they may be serviceable in... winning liberty for men and women.” He “fought being a Socialist for quite a long time” and accepted its “moderate discipline” with great reluctance. He was not converted by speeches or books, but rather the “grotesque inequalities, conspicuous waste, gross exploitation, and unnecessary poverty all about me.”

Norman Thomas for President

The American Socialist Party was the inheritor of the radical tradition brought forth by the Socialist Labor Party, the primary American radical political alliance of the last century. As the latter factionalized into insignificance, the former rose from two different regional movements (Midwestern and northeastern U.S.) to national prominence, with a membership well over 110,000. In 1920, at the peak of the progressive movement in 1920, Debs, running as the Socialist candidate for President of the United States from a Federal prison cell, polled nearly nine hundred thousand votes, while his party numbered among their members 56 mayors, hundreds of aldermen, some state legislators and even a U.S. congressman. Its candidate for leadership of the American labor movement, running against Samuel Gompers for the president

of the American Federation of Labor that year, won a third of the votes. The Party published 13 daily newspapers, almost 260 weeklies, and a dozen monthly periodicals, not to mention volumes of pamphlets. The influence of its youth organization and educational institution grew each year. Writers such as Jack London and Upton Sinclair gave vivid expression to its views.

Debs was imprisoned in 1918 under the Espionage Act; though he was pardoned by President Harding in 1921, his health was broken and he died in 1926. Norman Thomas was the obvious successor. Tall, attractive, dynamic in his late thirties, articulate, entirely ethical, well-organized, respected by party leaders and members alike, he took up the Party's practice of popularizing its message through campaigns for major office it did not expect to win. His first campaign was for governor of New York in 1924; he tried again for that post in 1938. He ran for mayor of New York in 1925 and again in 1929. He was also a candidate for state senate from New York's Lower East Side in 1926 and alderman from the same area in 1927, whose people he had served in his ministries. After running for city and state office four years in a row, his first of six campaigns for President was in 1928; only Harold Stassen has run more times for the nation's highest office. He ran again in 1932 against Roosevelt, polling nearly as many votes as Debs in 1920, and again in 1936, 1940, 1944, and 1948. His campaigns, so different from the well-financed efforts of the two major parties, involved his speaking as many times as possible, to as many people as possible, in as many places as a few tens of thousands of dollars would get him to. Yet, instead of garnering contempt for such paltry efforts, each of which yielded fewer votes than the last, his campaigns inspired tremendous and ever-growing respect and public admiration.

For one thing, it was clear not only that his thought was insightful and his words compelling, but that his motives were noble: with no prospect for winning office and all the power and material gains that adhere to it, few could doubt that he was inspired solely by the devotion to the nation and a better future for its people. Albert Einstein wrote him in 1954, "...I felt instinctively that you are one of the few whose every word carries true conviction, untarnished by hidden intentions. One feels, as well, your good will towards all." Bruce Bliven, the editor of the *New Republic*, noted Mr. Thomas's "foresight in predicting such events as the Hitler-Stalin pact, the Cold War,

and the nuclear stalemate long in advance” and guessed the secret to his success at the podium:

He has spent his life trying with fabulous energy to persuade the world to be good by talking to it. He is not a very skillful orator... he speaks rapidly and extemporaneously; his thoughts are sometimes too complicated to be fully grasped at such speed. Yet he is enormously popular with audiences, partly because he has a good sense of humor and does not take himself too seriously, partly because of his obvious, passionate sincerity, but chiefly, I think, because you get the sense that he is holding nothing back for political reasons, that he is doing his best to tell the truth as he sees it.

For another, it was clear to the powerful that he posed no mortal threat to their continued dominance, so there was little point to waging a campaign to discredit and destroy him. W.A. Swanberg, his most effective biographer, wrote, “Thomas campaigned not for Marxism but for Progressivism, not for revolution but for reform”; in fact, his gradualist outlook and fervent anti-Communism made him seem to some in power a tolerable reformer compared to the “red menace” that appeared to be the graver threat to the existing social order.

It is not entirely true that Mr. Thomas had no thought of winning electoral victory. When he began his quest for the highest office, he hoped that his vote could exceed the vote watermark Debs had achieved and break the one million barrier; and then, election by election and millions upon millions, his party could some day speak for the majority and fundamentally change American society. In the 1930s, he and most other radicals sensed a great political crisis emerging from the struggles against fascism in Europe and Asia, out of which could come the royal road to Socialist victory or the jagged descent into American fascism. As time clarified the nature of the danger and the world’s political polarities, he moderated his goal; as he wrote to his Princeton alumni, it was “to bring about, or help bring about, in our country a more realistic political alignment which might give us two major responsible parties, one of them democratic Socialist in principle whatever its name.” Presaging much current sentiment, he advised in 1929:

The two major parties...have no clear-cut difference between them. ...Obviously the choice between two parties which do not divide on basic principles, which belong to the same general set of interests, which fight for office and discuss at

election time only irrelevant or secondary issues, is next door to no choice at all.

We might as well save the expense of an election and draw lots for our rulers.

In 1944 he was still advising those who didn't want to "waste their vote" on a third party: "You...will be very unhappy if you throw away your vote by voting for what you don't want, and getting it."

Yet the numerical results of his two decades of campaigning caused him to tell his fellow Princetonians in 1956, "I've failed...in the chief purpose of my career." His electoral total in 1928 was only a quarter what Debs had polled eight years earlier from his prison cell, but it soared in 1932 to nearly nine hundred thousand votes. Four years later it plummeted to less than two hundred thousand, and in 1940 it was seventy thousand less than that. It got worse: just 80,518 votes nationwide in 1944, yet Swanberg writes that Mr. Thomas remained certain "that a Socialist-oriented third party was essential and could be successful." In his last campaign in 1948 his count increased by seventy-five percent to 140,260. Harry Fleischman, National Secretary of the Party, wrote of watching the election results with Mr. Thomas, "...we realized that the Socialist Party's last hope of creating a new political alignment through a new mass party had gone down the drain. ...All the labor and liberal forces which had expressed interest during the campaign in a possible new party immediately jumped back on the Truman bandwagon." (If they had not, given the close vote, Thomas Dewey would have been elected President.)

From then on Mr. Thomas opposed the running of Socialist candidates for President and other offices they could not hope to win. He wrote in 1952 that "what is left of the S.P. is a pitifully weak party and I could break my heart about it if it would do any good." He felt that the Party should give way to a purely educational organization advocating socialist principles, and he founded one called the Union of Democratic Socialists. (A. Phillip Randolph, the nation's most distinguished African-American labor leader and a devoted member of the Socialist Party, served as its vice chairman.) He was also very tired of conducting national campaigns; in 1962 a guest at a dinner he attended claimed she recalled his running for President when she was a little girl, to which he replied, "Madam, I've been running for President since I was a little boy."

What happened? Was it truly the fault of Norman Thomas? Was it his platform and program? World and national events? Internal struggles? What dashed his hopes of building a socialist movement that could steer his nation along a better course? And what might have the nation been had it followed that course?

Mr. Thomas himself put part of the blame on the American voters, whom he divided only half-seriously into four categories, none of which followed reason or principle. “There was,” wrote Swanberg, “what he called the Grandpappy Voter who merely aped the loyalty of his ancestors. The Good Man voter was moved by some real or fancied virtue in the candidate without even knowing his program. The Horse-racing Voter just wanted to vote for the winner. And the ‘Throw the Rascals Out’ Voter had a grudge, often mistaken, against some official believed to have erred.” Thomas’s conclusion was that the Party should focus on voter education rather than running for office. But he knew there were deeper answers that pointed to his own performance.

Socialist Leadership and Four “Isms”

Some other answers come from the fourth stage of his life: his leadership of the American Socialist Party as it endured its defining crisis of identity in the 1930s and ’40s. In that crisis, which determined the fate of socialism in the United States, Norman Thomas had to deal with four “isms” simultaneously: pacifism, Communism, factionalism, and two-partyism. Handling one or two would have been a historic challenge; all four, acting together at once, proved to be impossible.

Norman Thomas was a man of peace all his life, but during his life he evolved from absolute to relative pacifism. In his youth he shared the outlook of a typical Midwesterner, but at Union Theological Seminar he determined that Jesus Christ’s message commanded peace. That imperative was tested and defined in his young adulthood when the United States was divided by the debate for and against the nation’s entry into World War I. As he evolved away from his religious outlook, the moral and political aspects of pacifism prevailed in his mind. Through the ’twenties pacifism was almost integral to American socialism.

Then came the rise of Hitler and European fascism in the ’thirties, sweeping away overnight great socialist movements that American Socialists could only envy for their

size and substance. Month by month the situation resembled less a repeat of the contest of imperialists as in World War I, and more a decisive confrontation between Western civilization and truly demonic forces. Mr. Thomas held firm to his pacifist principles, not out of his earlier attachment to the Gospel but rather from his enduring conviction that the evils of war could never bring a better world, and that armed intervention in support of imperialist powers (France and Britain) against other imperialist powers (the Axis nations) had nothing to do with human progress. As the true nature of fascism's dark power became increasingly undeniable, as its persecutions of Jews in particular became ever more deadly, the logic of this anti-interventionism as a sensible political strategy began to waver.

When the Spanish Civil War resolved into the opening salvo of the world war against fascism, with the possibility that fascism's defeat there could somehow abort the larger struggle, Mr. Thomas crossed over from the absolute pacifism of John Haynes Holmes [GPA '61] and so many others of his long-time Socialist comrades and organized a Socialist brigade to fight Franco's forces. Rev. Holmes called it "a regiment of soldiers enlisted for the work of human slaughter" and recalled how "we stood fast when Belgians [during World War I] lifted cries as pitiful as those lifted by Spaniards today. ...I appeal to you as the successor of Gene Debs, and...an uncompromising pacifist...to save the Party and the nation from this madness..." Mr. Thomas replied that his intention was to lessen the possibility of world war.

Nonetheless he continued to work against American entry into the larger conflict that began with the Nazi invasion of Poland in 1939. He was a leader of the Keep America Out of War Congress, a coalition of many pacifist groups including the F.O.R., WILPF, the W.R.L., and even the right-wing America First Committee. He explained the "strange bedfellows" as best he could:

...Democracy will not be won or maintained by totalitarian war between rival imperialist powers and...it is our duty for ourselves and mankind to keep out. That this position seems to put us temporarily in the company of undesirable folks is regrettable but can no more be helped than in the first World War, when also we were called pro-German and what-not. If Debs could stand it, we can.

But it was a different time, and the position that had drawn droves of members and votes to Debs was now driving them away from Mr. Thomas. One former follower

wrote him once the War was underway, “You could not see through the mist of hatred for British past sins the horrors that were facing all of us in the event of British defeat.” Membership of the Socialist Party dwindled rapidly, especially among New York Jews who constituted the most significant element of the Party and who could see what Nazi success would surely mean for Jews everywhere. He observed in 1940:

Remember that in 1936 about 50% of our total vote came from New York State; 25% from New York City. We shall lose almost all of these voters in New York City because they are predominantly Jewish and do not like our stand on war and conscription. ...Frankly, many of us think that unless we do at least as well as we did in 1936, there won't be any Socialist Party worth talking about after the election.

The appeal of the Party and Mr. Thomas as its standard-bearer to the voting public plummeted as the threat of world fascism grew and the logic of pacifism seemed increasingly utopian and even dangerous. By 1940, on the eve of the most horrible conflict in history, the Party's and Mr. Thomas's insistence on pacifism seemed so unrealistic as to be insane. Then came Pearl Harbor, after which he dropped his opposition to entering the war even as his long-time pacifist stalwarts, such as John Haynes Holmes, clung to their absolute pacifism no matter what. Norman Thomas was no longer an absolute pacifist, though his commitment to finding the way to peace remained solid.

The second “ism” that blighted the Socialist Party was Communism. In the 'twenties, as an admirer of Marx's explanation of the political order, Mr. Thomas had encountered Marx's disciples in the Socialist Party, but he found the Communists completely unprincipled. In their interactions with the Socialist Party he determined that the American Communists had no compunctions about violating the most basic principles of good faith and honor to forward their immediate agendas, that those agendas were set and manipulated from Moscow, and that Communists in general smirked at Socialists and regarded them as obstacles to be removed from the path of progress, often through duplicity and sabotage. He foresaw and later witnessed that Soviet Communism and its acolytes held contempt for the ideals of personal freedom, civil rights, and even the allegiance to truth that were at the cornerstone of his own philosophy.

As late as 1936 he had written, "...the Soviet regime...is a workers' state, to be defended by the international working class whenever it clashes with the powers of capitalism." But after his visit to the U.S.S.R in 1937 he wrote:

...Russia is not moving toward a classless society, but on the contrary, perpetuating, and even strengthening, new class divisions. ...I felt, along with my great admiration for great social achievements, a pall of fear almost as if it were a tangible thing.

And two years later, in response to the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact, he added:

Stalin's duplicity... ends the notion, I hope, that it is Communism which is the arch enemy of Fascism. Communism and Fascism will only be enemies to the extent they are both rivals for power in a totalitarian society.

That same year he observed:

It is a world where the disciples of Machiavelli [meaning Hitler and Stalin] change sides so often one cannot guide one's conduct primarily by the company in which one temporarily finds oneself but rather by principle.

He found that Communist invitations to form a united front with Socialists were the seeds of treachery, as confirmed by this statement by one of their leaders about their encounter in 1936 and 1937: "Partly as a result of our [work]...the Socialist Party was put on the sidelines." The same leader had also written of the Socialist Party leadership, "They were ignorant, untalented, petty-minded, weak, cowardly, treacherous, and vain. They had other faults too."

Mr. Thomas learned quickly to take a hard line, first against cooperation with American Communists, then against Soviet Communism in all its manifestations, and finally against any sign of Communist influence in the United States. He responded to one call for a united front in 1935:

The differences between us preclude organic unity. We do not accept control from Moscow, the old Communist accent on inevitable violence and party dictatorship, or the new Communist accent on the possible good of war against Fascism... We assert genuine civil liberty in opposition to Communist theory and practice in Russia.

The Communists hurt the Socialist Party by drawing away its more militant members through its more florid calls to the revolutionary barricades, and more directly by infiltrating the Party and provoking internal dissension that demoralized its members

and drove them to quit or to migrate to less contentious and more promising parties. Mr. Thomas's encounter with Communists and their attempts to prey on his Party began the unstinting anti-Communism that would define his political work from then on.

Factionalism was the third "ism" that cost the Socialist Party its chance at becoming a permanent American political force. More significant even than the contention over pacifism and communism was a battle to the death between the elder and younger members of the Party between 1934 and 1941. It began when the younger members, known as the Militants, authored a document called the Declaration of Principles, which was intended to be the creed and manifesto of the Party and which echoed the style and ideology of the Communist Manifesto. In the pit of the worldwide depression, with Hitler on the rise, radical measures seemed to be called for. The Declaration incited workers to "establish a cooperative commonwealth forever free from human exploitation and class rule"; affirmed its intention to "fight Fascism of every kind all the time and everywhere in the world, until Fascism is dead", yet opposed military activity or preparedness of any kind; declared that "Capitalism is doomed"; and indicated, as Mr. Thomas biographer Murray Seidler put it, "that in the event of war or fascism [in the United States] strict adherence to parliamentary and nonviolent methods would be questionable policy."

The elder members were called the Old Guard. They held the reins of Party power, saw to its financial support, "had lived through the trying days of World War I and the ensuing Red Scare, and they were not eager to find themselves once again among the hunted", in Seidelman's words. More important, their allegiance was to democratic, legal, nonviolent methods and the call for anything else seemed to them an invitation to be suppressed. Mr. Thomas, not yet fifty years old, felt a debt to the Old Guard but also thought they exercised a "dead hand" on the Party machinery that kept it from being what he felt it could become. He was desperately intent on building the membership of the Party, which meant attracting and holding the younger members, which meant supporting the Militants. He felt that the Declaration was not at all out of bounds of what the Party should stand for, and so he became the leader of the Militants while devoting his persuasive powers to softening the Militants' rhetoric in the

hope of making it palatable to the Old Guard. Over the six-year struggle, as members fell away amidst the contentiousness of bitter partisanship, Mr. Thomas did everything possible to patch up the rift that threatened to decimate the Party. In the end the Old Guard, the backbone and financial lifeblood of the Party, split and formed their own organization, the Social Democratic Federation.

As Mr. Thomas himself later pointed out, much of the Militants' contentions, arising from vainglorious attempts to foresee the correct response to future events, proved to be folly. Their absolute pacifism and fervent anti-capitalism dissolved as events moved inexorably toward world war with fascism under the leadership of that capitalist reformer Franklin Roosevelt. In fact, by the early 'forties events had effaced the doctrinal divisions between the two factions, but not the bitter memories of the battle. Though the two factions eventually reunited, there was no recovering the spirit of common struggle that had once propelled the Party toward electoral success. One member wrote bitterly in her letter of resignation in 1937, "When by folly after folly we succeed in reducing the Party to the irreducible minimum of the pure essence of revolutionary Socialism, I'll be glad to join a committee to build a suitable museum for the strange creature who will be left as a result of our efforts."

Finally, the Party, like so many other attempts, was done in by the workings of the American two-party system. A minor factor was the difficulty of getting on the ballot in many states, and staying on it from election to election; actually the hurdles to doing so are vastly higher today. Likewise minor was the limitation of the meager resources available to a third party, which again was less of a problem then than it is in today's campaign orgies of money and television time. The major injury was done by the tendency of the Democratic Party to shift toward the left enough to absorb the majority of those voters with progressive tendencies, drawing them away from the Socialist Party toward "a party that can actually win", far enough to reform the capitalist order, yet not far enough to really threaten it. What most Americans considered the salvation of the American worker was simultaneously the undoing of the American Socialist Party: F.D.R.'s New Deal, which eventually enacted so many of the reforms Mr. Thomas had advocated that it seemed to many that the Party was hardly left with anything substantive to promise voters beyond the end of capitalism itself. (Such an

evaluation overlooked three promises that did *not* emerge from the New Deal: the end to imperialist intervention, the preference for peace and disarmament over militarism, and the permanent structural empowerment of workers.)

Countless dedicated Socialists, including many at the core of the Party, wound up as dedicated Democrats with responsible positions in the Roosevelt and Truman administrations. To Mr. Thomas, they had traded principle for the expedient of actually having the power to get something done. A former Socialist wrote to him, “You chose to stick to a biblical rigidity in your application of Socialist theory to political action” rather than supporting Roosevelt and the New Deal and building a Socialist-liberal coalition that could have attracted a mass following for progressive change. That overlooked Mr. Thomas’s fear that F.D.R.’s policies might be leading the country into a new kind of American fascism—signs of which emerged during the Cold War, in McCarthyism, in the attempts to suppress African-American struggles for justice, in the C.I.A.’s disdain for truth and self-determination, in the imposition on the American people of an unpopular imperialist war in Vietnam, in the ultimate ruination of the American economy by the military-industrial complex, and so on—all of which Mr. Thomas vigorously protested.

The pacifist issue in the face of war with fascism, the lure of New Deal reformism in the face of the Great Depression, the corrosion achieved by the Communists, the unending factionalism within the Socialist Party, and the protean nature of the Democratic Party—it was a tangle of forces and events that the literate Mr. Thomas compared to negotiating Dante’s circles of hell. Beyond this, there was the ever-present burden of championing causes that were unpopular and provoked the opposition of the powerful, which translated into inadequate funding, endless disappointments, censure and misrepresentation, threats of violence (Mr. Thomas was once briefly kidnapped to keep him from addressing a labor group), and even sabotage by government agents acting as provocateurs and sowers of confusion and dissension within the Party itself. Mr. Thomas failed to find a way to bring the Party through it all alive, which given his commitment to principled gentility over ruthlessness may well have been humanly impossible. But he succeeded brilliantly in bringing himself through, emerging from the period of World War II as a political advisor whose prestige was unprec-

edented for any American publicly committed to the end of the nation's reigning economic order.

Thomas the Statesman

He thus entered the final stage of his career. In the twenty years following the war that saw the defeat of fascism, he was an ideological soldier against Soviet Communism and its manifestations in the U.S. and elsewhere, which he regarded as the other form of totalitarianism that threatened humanity. Yet he also was a leader in fighting McCarthyism and the other forms of unprincipled expediency that proposed to battle Communism with fascist means. He held fast to the belief that change would eventually come from the people of the U.S.S.R. who would eventually force the regime to loosen its terroristic grip on its people, and he saw Khrushchev as the agent for the beginning of that change: "Khrushchev...is concerned about the Russian desire for more consumer goods. ...It can't be satisfied without cutting military expenditures." [1960] His earlier convictions of the need to nationalize private enterprise had moderated to a call for social control of the "commanding heights of the economy", examples of which already in place, such as the Tennessee Valley Authority, the air traffic control system, public education, and the Postal Service. "His overriding purpose for the rest of his life," wrote Swanberg, "was to steer the nation (despite his awkward position so far from the tiller) away from World War III, in which Russia would be the enemy. ...If there was anyone as early, insistent and informed as Norman Thomas in propagandizing the need for universal controlled disarmament, he does not come to mind." Mr. Thomas himself wrote in 1956:

I am persuaded that my present less than apocalyptic convictions do point the way if not to utopia at least to the delivery of mankind from the kind of catastrophe which continuation of the present policies seems to me to [make] rather more probable than any forward march of man...not because man per se is becoming worse, but because the consequences of his folly and sins can be so much more catastrophic now that he has become...master of the incredible power of the atom.

He became a columnist and broadcaster and author whose thoughts reached millions "on all matters concerning all politics, all issues, and all nations," as Swanberg put it. In 1945 alone, according to that author, "he had almost concurrent articles on

national and international affairs in *The Christian Century*, *Commonweal*, *The Progressive*, *Common Sense*, and *Human Events*..." His Socialist label kept him from a position as a network pundit, though Walter Winchell and others demonstrated that the networks and their advertisers had no problem with far-right commentators—reminiscent of today's media situation.

He rose easily to the stature of international statesman, with ready access to the highest levels of American power to present his views and advance his proposals for making the world safer from war and more hospitable to human rights.

He achieved all this, once his struggles to hold together the Party and win votes for the Presidency were over, through his outstanding qualities in four areas. First, he simply looked and sounded the part of the archetypal Great American Leader: tall, patrician, forceful, charming with a "thousand-watt smile", eloquent, unsurpassed as a political orator and commentator, unchallenged as a principled advocate for humanity's struggle to transcend its venal nature. Second, it was obvious that he was out for nothing for himself other than the opportunity to contribute his insights and influence the general public and their often benighted leaders. Third, he had achieved some measure of fame in his six national campaigns, yet had avoided the customary ridicule of the perennial candidate through his excellence of thought and unblemished integrity. He had not won high office, but he had won great influence.

Most important, by the end of the war he had developed a cogent world view that balanced progressive principles and positions with a convincing realism about the dangers of the world and the venality of those ruthless enough to achieve great power. Again and again, he advocated a position in support of civil rights or world peace but not to the point of crossing the line into idealistic fantasy. Even those leaders who nonetheless considered him utopian or worse listened carefully to what he had to say, because it seemed—it invariably was—so very *sane*. [He eventually became a leader of the disarmament organization of the same name.]

Year after year he was able to analyze current evils, project their probable outcomes with great accuracy, and propose solutions that either would have aborted those outcomes or would provide some relief to their consequences. In the midst of the

Depression he described a scene that remind us of urban homelessness today, and proposed solutions that were enacted into law over the following thirty years:

Men and women search the garbage cans...competing with rats and stray cats. ...That's how the celebrated law of supply and demand works under capitalism. ...No hope? No hope unless we declare war on poverty. ...We intend to subsidize consumption instead of letting the subsidies all go to producers seeking profit. ...The Federal government should grant emergency subsidies to unemployed families on a weekly basis. ...The next great Socialist principle is the five-day week. ...There is no conceivable physical reason why every American family should not be well fed, well clothed, well housed, possessing its own radio and automobile and, above all, free from that dread fear of tomorrow which is the tyrant of our waking and sleeping hours.

He realized before most other radical contemporaries the naïveté of seeing the working class as the messianic force that would bring an imminent end to history, as he saw American organized labor (in Swanberg's words) "sinking deeper into the rapacity and corruption once linked habitually with capital" and realized by what he observed in the U.S.S.R. that the end of the profit system would not in itself end exploitation, for "men covet power as much as profit."

His statement on violence in 1934, when many believed the economic crisis could lead to open rebellion, was not sufficiently pacifistic to be Gandhian, but it was a treatment of the subject that was consistent with some modern liberation theology:

...The working class cannot renounce all right to use of violence in the face of an owning class which uses it habitually. But... America with its lynchings, its third degree, and its criminal gangs, is peculiarly a sadistic country, wherein to unleash great violence is far more likely to invite chaos and dark night than any constructive revolution. ...At the very least, what is needed is a...critical analysis of the kinds and degrees of violence and the circumstances in which its use may possibly be surgical rather than purely destructive. ...No violent act and no dictatorial power can do more than remove ancient abuses. A new life will have to be planned and guided. And if that life is strong enough its struggle for power will not involve catastrophic destruction. It will come to fulfill and not to destroy the dreams of those Americans who have held that all men are entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

As the nation's most articulate opponent of imperialism and interventionism, he identified early what would drive many of the conflicts of the post-war era, including Vietnam:

The English-speaking nations are to police in God's name such places as we think necessary for our advantage, doing justice...to the "lesser breeds without the law." [1939] ...In all the furor of discussion of Indochina everybody has been mentioned except the Indochinese." [1942] I mistrust...the whole business of our policing the world or any part of it indefinitely. [1944] French colonial policy continues to be imperialist to a degree that makes any hope of a decent peace in Indochina very dim... [1953] Above all, I think it is the business of the Senate to see that we don't suddenly find ourselves in an undeclared war in Indochina. ...In general, we have to remember that the United States is not omnipotent... [1954] ...[in] the new American imperialism...our support has been given, not to the awakening peoples...but to corrupt, reactionary governing cliques so long as they were anti-communist. [1958] Why is Laos important enough to risk millions of dollars and quite possibly the lives of our sons in a war to determine who will govern its poor people? The usual answer...is that our security depends upon our keeping this backward little country, strategically placed, out of the hands of the Communists. ...[Have] we not far more to fear from a war in Southeast Asia which would soon get out of hand...than from any attack or aggression against our basic security directed from that distant part of the world? [1960] In Vietnam, the Kennedy administration has already taken a long chance on full-scale war by the degree to which it is involving American military forces in aid to a numerous South Vietnamese army which is apparently reluctant to do its own effective fighting. ...Our military power is not going to stop Communism in the long run simply by shoring up governments like Diem's. ...This sort of thing may indeed grow into a new sort of imperialism to manage governments which mismanage their own affairs. Still worse, it could grow into a cruel guerrilla war. [1962] Once more in the Vietnam crisis we seem to be observing the Christian churches in their familiar role of opposing all wars except the one they are in. ...By what right has the church of Christ so long accepted cruel guerrilla war in Vietnam, fought by American conscripts along unwilling Vietnamese, as a war nominally for liberty? [letter to *The Christian Century* in 1965]

He was just as prescient about the events to come relating to Cuba as to Vietnam. Relating to our nuclear bases in Turkey, he wrote even before Castro had finally allied with the Soviets:

“If the Russians had tried to establish one base in the Caribbean, it would have meant war.” [1960] [After U-2 incident] “How would we feel if in...Cuba the Russians had half as many bases and planes and flyers as we have in Turkey?” [1960]

As Washington hardened its position toward the new Cuban government he wrote:

“[U.S. economic intervention against Castro and support for anti-Castro military actions] will give Castro every reason to draw still closer to the U.S.S.R. and will excuse Khrushchev for giving him outright military aid.” [1960]

In 1961 he debated William F. Buckley, Jr., concerning Cuba policy. Buckley, Mr. Thomas wrote to a friend, called for “raking the island clean of Communists.” Mr. Thomas responded to this psychotic approach, noting again the connection between Cuba and Turkey that would eventually prove decisive in solving the missile crisis:

...[Buckley gave] No consideration of good as well as evil in the Cuban social revolution. No treaty agreement, no United Nations, no Organization of American States, no respect for world opinion, no fear of Khrushchev's threats should deter us... We should not allow a Communist government to exist 90 miles from our shores. Wasn't this argument analogous...to a possible Russian intervention in Turkey where we have many bases close to the Russian border? ...[Buckley replied that] it was a question of our power and our interest against theirs. ...The power doctrine points a sure road to ultimate world war. It is the enemy not only of our leadership for democracy and peace in the world but also of the security it seeks to serve.

At the onset of the Bay of Pigs invasion Mr. Thomas prepared an open letter to President Kennedy, which A.J. Muste [GPA '61] and Donald Harrington, among others, co-signed. The following year his many prophecies came true in the form of the missile crisis. He wrote in his 1960 newspaper columns:

The President...knows, as the American people must not forget, that we have very many bases around the Soviet Union. ...The Kremlin has not challenged our right to service those bases. It may now, e.g. in Turkey.

In our era of peace under threat of massive retaliation, our fate is literally in the hands not merely of heads of governments but of hundreds of anonymous colonels [who have access to tactical nukes in the field]—our own, our allies', and our enemies'.

We now know what most Americans hadn't believed: that in the widely played game of peacetime espionage we lie and cheat like the rest of them—only better, we now boast, because of our technical skill. In the anarchy of the relations of sovereign nations there are no morals, there is no crime, except to be caught.

This last paragraph was a haunting prophecy of the revelation that the C.I.A. itself had funded the Congress for Cultural Freedom, of which Mr. Thomas had once been vice-chairman, a secret that was revealed in 1961.

Although U.S. entry into World War II devastated him—"I feel as if my world has pretty much come to an end, that what I have stood for has been defeated, and my own usefulness made small"—he set an agenda for progressive action that was appropriate for all the conflicts in which the nation has engaged in, then or since:

...our little Socialist Party has a great role to play in difficult days in complete loyalty to its past, on the basis of an active program of working for civil liberties, democratic Socialism, and an anti-imperialist peace. It should be alert for the day when a peace offensive may offer far more hope to the people than an indefinite continuance of war. [1941]

Concerning the usual wartime call to "support our boys overseas" via uncritical support of the war, he defined the progressive response in a letter to TIME magazine:

...My quarrel has never been with young men who enlist in such services, but with older and more ambitious men who would send our youth, under compulsion, to war in the service of an Anglo-American imperialism. [1941]

He was among the first and most effective political figures to protest the internment of 116 thousand Japanese-Americans beginning in 1942: "We are practicing a kind of race discrimination for which we blame the Germans. ...[Internment is] like burning down Chicago to get rid of gangsters." A widely-circulated pamphlet he wrote on the subject, along with a blizzard of communications to those who might have influence (including J. Edgar Hoover), resulted in the amelioration of conditions in the camps.

He did what he could in 1944 to persuade the Allies not to demand unconditional surrender, condemning the policy as "prolonging this war and inviting the next." He strongly protested the obliteration bombing of German and Japanese cities, at the crescendo of the war when there could hardly have been a less popular position. The following year he knew Japan's surrender was a certainty, delayed in the end primarily

by the unconditional surrender policy. He was outraged by the dropping of the first atomic bomb on an undefended city with no military installations, and completely infuriated when the second bomb was dropped before the Japanese could reasonably be expected to respond politically to the first.⁷ He believed that gratuitous slaughter disqualified us from judging our enemies after the war's end.

He was also among the first to warn that averting a third world war depended on treating the vanquished with the justice and generosity they had been denied by the victors of World War I, substituting the U.N. for America as the world's policeman, and ending the peace-time draft. He did everything he could until his death to turn the country away from an economy based on preparing for atomic war—"I am very fearful of our arms economy [that] gives workers as well as industrialists a vested interest in the horrible 'prosperity' it brings"—prophesying accurately that such an economy would ultimately lead to national decline and trying, in Swanberg words, "to persuade the people that the armaments gravy train was en route to catastrophe."

After World War II he transferred his focus from the Party to a new group he founded called the Post War World Council. Freed from Party infighting, in Swanberg's words, "he could... exert his genius in propaganda—the use of the telephone, the letter, the pamphlet, the newsletter, the committee, the picket line, the press, the radio, the Congressional hearing, the speech or debate or any medium for wielding influence toward desirable ends anywhere in the world."

Throughout his life he was compelled to wrestle with the demon who whispered that, despite his peerless accomplishments over so many decades, he was nonetheless a failure. He recorded some of these agonies:

My own spirits were at a low ebb. Here I was [in 1924] almost 40, father of a large family, well trained for a profession I couldn't honestly follow [i.e. the ministry], a failure in meeting the great opportunity which had come to me. [i.e. the editorship of a labor daily newspaper]

⁷ There is good evidence that a willingness to entertain an offer of conditional surrender from Japan, allowing them to keep the emperor as a figurehead, could have led to an end of that conflict without the use of atomic weapons, especially since that condition was ultimately granted anyway.

[After the entry of the U.S. into the war following the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor] I feel as if my world has pretty much come to an end, that what I have stood for has been defeated, and my own usefulness made small.

[Contemplating the enormity of the developing Cold War in 1947] What haunts me is a kind of foreboding about the future of the world and a sense of failure.

[Considering in 1951 his career leading the Socialist Party] My feeling...was that few men had more conspicuously failed than I in the things I have tried hardest to do in the last 35 years. [1951]

[Referring, in a 1956 letter to fellow Princeton alumni, to his inability to build a great national political movement] I've failed...in the chief purpose of my career.

His political commitments led him far beyond the confines of the campaign trail. He fought for the rights of the virtually enslaved sharecroppers of Arkansas, facing the ruthless violence of the planters there. He got equally involved in the struggles of New Jersey textile workers and risked personal injury (or worse) at the hands of the police of the boss-dominated city of Camden. He made personal enemies of oppressive authorities in numerous cities and companies, pressed hard for consideration for soldiers, whistle-blowers, organizers, and prisoners who he felt had been victims of injustice, and fought Jim Crow in the north as well as the south despite the obvious danger.

He donated money to the Students for a Democratic Society (S.D.S.) in 1965 despite its "growing rashness". Tom Hayden half-seriously counted Mr. Thomas, along with C. Wright Mills and Michael Harrington, as the only three people over thirty his generation should trust. Of the New Left he provided in his eightieth year possibly the most accurate analysis available, in a 1965 number of his column for the Denver Post:

In the Thirties the old Left and, today, the New Left among the students represent a significant revolt against what is now called the establishment and its mores, but there are significant differences. The old Left was primarily concerned with economic conditions. Its members were Socialists or Communists or sympathizers. A much higher percentage of their members came from the working class than is the case with the New Left, most of whose members seem to come from a prosperous middle class.

Theirs is most definitely a revolt against what they regard as bourgeois values and they are more conscious of the infallibility of youth as against middle age. They are more inclined to find "the poor" as bearers of [social] salvation rather than the working class, certainly as it expresses itself in the unions. In the Thir-

ties we had no beatniks but they are numerous in the New Left. [Mr. Thomas was writing two years before the term "hippie" emerged.] The New Lefters are...more concerned about foreign policy than the old Left and they are...anti-Washington's version of Americanism.

But to my mind the chief difference is that the members of the old Left had pretty definite programs, chiefly economic, Socialist or Communist. The New Left is very amorphous in program, inclined to be nihilistic, anarchistic rather than Socialist. Freedom from dogmatism is a good thing but lack of program is not... I deeply regret the tendency of some rather conspicuous members of the New Left to appear more interested in a Communist victory in Vietnam than in a constructive peace. ...⁸

His consistent and outspoken anti-communism and his lucid reasoning made him possibly the nation's most effective proponent of disarmament in the nuclear age, when the alternative became too horrible to contemplate: in Mr. Thomas's immortal phrase, "a war after which the living would envy the dead." And he continually underlined the undeniable connection between disarmament and the relief of global misery:

Any hope of peace requires transfer of conflict from the realm of war. And that means universal and enforceable disarmament under a strengthened United Nations, with provision for its own police force. Only with disarmament would it be possible for us Americans to do the other thing absolutely necessary, which is to present a practicable plan for a cooperative war, under United Nations direction, against the world's desperate poverty. It could be easily financed out of what the world would save on arms.

We don't mean reduction in arms; we mean prohibition of weapons of mass destruction under effective and continued inspection; the universal end of peacetime military conscription; the reduction of all armies to a police level to

⁸ That regret, written so near the end of his life, shows him to be in the final analysis more pacifist than anti-imperialist. A "constructive peace" in lieu of Communist victory would presumably have had to mean the inclusion of the elements of South Vietnamese society that the South Vietnamese government supposedly represented. Such a settlement would have meant a continuation of the partition of the country, since those elements could never have found a place in the hard-line Communist society of North Vietnam. Yet the termination of the partition was—together with the cessation of any imperialist presence in the country—the primary objective of all progressive elements throughout Vietnam. Hence, for the Vietnamese Communists, as for the U.S. in the World War II, unconditional victory was the only option, and any conceivable efforts toward a "constructive peace" as an alternative were meaningless.

preserve internal order; and the creation of an international police force under a strengthened United Nations. [1950]

One way to gauge the inexhaustible activism of Norman Thomas is to consider the organizations in which he took an active leadership role. As an example, at the age of sixty-six he was still a moving force in committees and organizations—in addition to the Socialist Party itself and its National Executive Committee, its Public Affairs Committee, and its Call (party newspaper) Association—that included the Post War World Council, the League for Industrial Democracy, the American Civil Liberties Union, the India League of America, New York's Town Hall and its board of trustees, the Citizens Committee for United Nations Reform, the Inter-American Association for Democracy and Freedom, the National Sharecroppers Fund, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the International League for the Rights of Man, the American Committee on Africa, the Coordinating Council of the Fifteenth Precinct [in New York], the American Association for a Democratic Germany, the Newspaper Guild, the International Rescue Committee, and the Workers Defense League. As Swanberg dryly comments, "There were undoubtedly more."

Above all, through the blizzard of his activities, Norman Thomas succeeded in the nearly impossible task of facing the world as it is, in all its evil and insanity, responding out of a fundamental optimism and faith in the power of civilization to save itself, with practical solutions inspired by an all-inclusive vision of the brotherhood of humankind:

I am fighting for what I believe with all my heart. It is the best thing we can do in a world we did not make... [1941]

[To his son Evan on his way to war as an ambulance driver in 1941] I suspect that you will find much that makes for cynicism about us men and our ways, but I've found it a help to consider that if God must be disappointed in us, so must be the devil in the presence of such courage and comradeship as plain people show. ...Despite our follies and madness men are made for better things than constant exploitation and ever recurring wars.

[A case in 1943 of persecution of a whistle-blower] is important because of the sinister light it sheds on the uncommonness of common honesty.

Without some notion of brotherhood, civilization, indeed the very life of the race, would have been impossible. But, through the ages, the idea of brotherhood has generally been restricted to members of the same family, tribe, nation or race, or to believers in the same religious or political creed. There always will be a particular sense of fellowship resting on common loyalties. But today the peace, and certainly the happiness, of the world requires a larger and more inclusive sense of brotherhood for all the sons and daughters of earth. ... This brotherhood must take account of the existence of important differences of opinion. Its emphasis must not lie on imposed unity of thought, but on a common abhorrence of cruelty, oppression, and everything that would reduce human life to the status of a commodity and man himself to the level of a thing. [1950]

In 1954, on the occasion of his seventieth birthday, *The New York Times* editorialized simply, "His brand of Socialism consists mainly of jumping in wherever he thinks human beings are being abused or human rights ignored, and doing something about it." Two years later he began, in Swanberg's words, "a correspondence with a previously little-known Alabama preacher, Martin Luther King, whom he praised for his leadership of the [1955 Montgomery] bus boycott and above all for his adherence to nonviolence." Mr. Thomas lived long enough to see King's rise, joining him on the platform at the 1963 March on Washington, speaking before King delivered his immortal "I Have A Dream" speech. And he lived long enough to endure the news of King's assassination in 1968, the year Mr. Thomas joined him, and RFK, in death.

Chapter Seven

1967: The Elder and the New Generation—

Jerome Davis & William Sloane Coffin, Jr.

The Gandhi Peace Award for 1967 was unique in two ways. It paid homage to P.E.P.'s founder as he graduated from his executive director role; and it recognized a relatively young man for his current activities in a new generation of social activists.

Jerome Davis: What One Dedicated Life Can Do

On hearing Dr. Davis's announcement that he would surrender his position as executive director to Roy Pfaff, P.E.P.'s advisory board unanimously voted to confer the Award on him. He would thus become the tenth recipient of the Award he himself had created. (His story is told in Volume I.)

William Sloane Coffin, Jr.

If you don't stand for something, you're likely to fall for anything. —WSC

The other recipient was to be the Rev. William Sloane Coffin, Jr., the Chaplain of Yale University. At 42 years of age, he would be the youngest recipient of the Award—the first whose hair had not yet gone grey. To comprehend the significance of his work it is useful to recall not only his background but also the tenor of the time.

Lyndon Johnson was President and half a million young American men were fighting in Vietnam. The myth of American moral and cultural superiority, the faith in American authority and the American system itself was dissolving under the pressure of hundreds of body bags returning from Vietnam week after week. In trying to comprehend the roots of the War, college students were making connections between militarism, capitalism, racism, corruption and authoritarianism—in essence, the military-industrial complex and the value system that sustained and legitimized it. If Americans could live year after year in denial about their nation's role in endangering the human race with its ever-growing nuclear arsenal, it became harder to deny the devastation and evil portrayed in television news report from Nam night after night. In the next several years the loss of belief in America's values would take with it the allegiance of the youth to the standards and mores of their elders—a cultural implosion of

unprecedented dimensions. The music of youth began to cry for revolution; psychedelic drugs were making their appearance on campuses; the Beatles sang, "I'd love to turn you on," referring both to getting high and shaking free of the cultural deadness that stood in the way of a better world. Destruction and violence began to appear to be reasonable methods for bringing down the old order; nonviolence seemed to belong to yesterday.

Rev. Coffin was at the eye of that cultural hurricane. His job was to represent the spirit of Christ on campus, prophetic in the face of institutionalized evil yet rooted in the spirit of peace and the way of love. Week after week he spoke to students about the evils of the time, their causes, and the need to stand against them with committed, positive nonviolent action. He set a pattern followed by university ministers all over the country that helped focus the rebellious spirit on campus where it was most likely to effect genuine progressive change. The year after he won the Award he would gain national attention for leading Yale through the upheavals that followed the assassinations of King and Robert Kennedy, standing four-square against American militarism and institutionalized racism and economic exploitation at home and abroad.

Ironically, William Sloane Coffin, Jr., opponent of militarism and interventionism, is an alumnus of the Central Intelligence Agency and the U.S. Army. His studies at the Yale School of Music were interrupted by Army service during World War II and for several years afterward. He studied at Union Theological Seminary and Yale, then spent two years in the hire of the C.I.A. [detail]

He returned to Yale to earn his divinity degree by 1956, when he was ordained a Presbyterian minister. After brief terms as chaplain at Phillips Academy, one of his alma maters, and Williams College, in 1958 he became Yale's chaplain. In the next nine years he developed his powerful ability to analyze the moral failings of American culture and to present that analysis in compelling sermons that pointed the way toward peace and social justice.

The 1967 Award Ceremony

The 1967 Award presentation on October 5th began with a buffet supper (cost: \$2.50). The Rev. Wallace Viets, by then the president of P.E.P., gave the invocation. A first at the 1967 Award presentation was the showing of slides of P.E.P.'s 1967

World Tour by Dr. Edward Lewis, covering stops in England, the Soviet Union, India, Thailand, Hong Kong, Japan and Hawaii. P.E.P.'s past president, Dr. Kirtley Mather made the Award presentation to Jerome Davis, followed by the Rev. Richard Newhaus with the presentation to Rev. Coffin. A special presentation was made to Dr. Davis by Dr. Edward Young in recognition of his retirement from active leadership of P.E.P. Rev. Coffin and Dr. Davis both made addresses; it was a very full evening.

Chapter Eight

1968: Peace = “Get Out of Vietnam”—Benjamin Spock

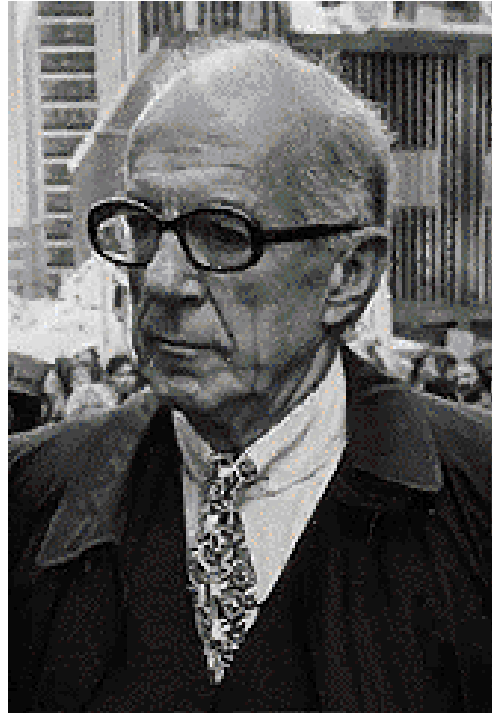
Of the previous Gandhi Peace Award recipients, there were six clergymen, one scientist, an author, a professor, and Eleanor Roosevelt. In 1968 the scope of the Award was further broadened by its presentation to the most famous pediatrician in the world.

Benjamin Spock

It was the year of the Tet offensive, the series of battles in Vietnam that marked the doom of the hope of U.S. victory—a war that apparently could not be stopped regardless of morality or costs. It was the year when the powerful leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert F. Kennedy against continuing the U.S. military effort in Vietnam ended with their assassinations. It was a year of waves of grimly idealistic, sometimes violent protests on campus, rebellions and riots in the inner cities, machine gun emplacements on the steps of the Capitol, tear gas and police riots at the Democratic convention. The eloquent and subtle language of nonviolence was drowned out by angry slogans from both sides of the barricades and the call to win “by any means necessary.”

To the millions of Americans extremely disturbed by those events, Dr. Spock appeared as a voice of sanity leading the way to peace. He had helped two generations of Americans through the trials of parenthood with his reassuring advice that emphasized loving discipline over mechanistic child-rearing systems and the traditional “spoil the rod” reliance on corporeal punishment. His manner was unassuming, matter of fact and very un-crazy. His professional credentials were impeccable. And he was a committed activist against the War—against war itself.

Born in New Haven in 1903, Dr. Spock earned his B.A. at Yale and his M.D. at Columbia. At age 43 his life as a pediatrician in private practice changed forever with the publication of *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care*, which in the next thirty years sold more copies than any other original title ever published in the United States. He was a comfortably tenured professor of child development at Western Reserve University from the mid-fifties until 1967, when his growing concern and distress about the direction American society was taking reached the boiling point. In that year he resigned, left the university, and began devoting his full time to the growing national campaign to end the war in Vietnam. Among the two hundred sixty demonstrators arrested at a December 1967 demonstration in New York was Benjamin Spock (as well as poet Allen Ginsberg and 1967 Award recipient William Sloane Coffin, Jr.).



Benjamin Spock, M.D.

Dr. Spock's outspokenness against the War was met by official derision and a campaign to discredit him in the public mind, leading to his Federal prosecution for his arrest. It was at this moment that he was chosen to receive the Gandhi Peace Award.

Publicity for the event had been growing year by year. Roy Pfaff, P.E.P.'s Executive Director, had been gradually increasing the involvement of other peace organizations in getting out the word about the Gandhi Peace Award ceremonies. For the Spock presentation, he used the mailing lists of Willard Uphaus's World Fellowship of Faiths and the War Resisters League, and he induced Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, the Committee for Nonviolent Action, the Protestant Council of New York, and the League for Industrial Democracy to mail out notices of the event. P.E.P. covered the costs of most of these mailings, though several groups did kick in for part or all of the

postage. Through this method, invitations went out to five or six thousand additional peace activists and sympathizers, mostly in the New York City area. In return, P.E.P. agreed to do reciprocal mailings on the same basis for several of the groups, and did so for World Fellowship of Faiths. In addition, ads announcing the event were placed in the NEW YORK TIMES, the national radical weekly GUARDIAN, and various smaller journals.

In the years following the Award, Dr. Spock redoubled his efforts for peace. In 1970 he published *Decent and Indecent*, and in 1972, having decided that the two dominant political parties were beyond hope of reform, he ran for President of the United States under the banner of the People's Party.

The 1968 Award Ceremony

The presentation on Tuesday evening October 8th began with the usual \$2.50 buffet supper. Then Dorothy Hutchinson, past president of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), spoke about her attendance at that organization's international convention in Europe and its plans for peace work. Dr. John Bennett, president of Union Theological Seminary, then presented the Award to Dr. Spock, who presented an address about his commitment as a pediatrician to end the War. As he said 21 years later, "I was proud of the youths who opposed the war in Vietnam because they were my babies."

Chapter Nine

1970: The War Drags On—Wayne Morse & Willard Uphaus

Two years after one President had been brought down by the seemingly endless Vietnam War, and a new President had been elected on a promise to bring it to a speedy conclusion, U.S. military operations were still expanding—dramatically so. It was the year when President Nixon ordered the carpet bombing of neutral Cambodia, the year when for the first time American college students were shot to death during campus demonstrations against that bombing, the year of the Mobilization Against the War, the largest demonstration of any kind in the history of the nation's capital. American opinion polls consistently reported massive public opposition to the War, as casualties surpassed fifty thousand. World opinion was even more one-sided, with protests world-wide against the United States as an “outlaw nation” whose leaders were guilty of war crimes and atrocities. The trial of American soldiers who perpetrated the massacre of Vietnamese elders, women, and children at My Lai in 1968 was a major story that produced an exchange that seemed to say it all:

Investigator to massacre perpetrator Lt. William Calley: “And babies?”

Lt. Calley: “And babies.”

Yet it seemed that the nation's leaders could find no way out of war except more war, more war, more war.

In this paradoxical time of both national unity and national despair about the prospects for peace, P.E.P. honored two symbols of America's resistance to the Vietnam War. One was Wayne Morse, a symbol of resistance within the establishment, within the government itself. The other was Willard Uphaus, a religion professor, internationalist, and peace movement leader, who represented the multitudes at the grass roots throughout the world who were ready to stand up and be counted for peace.

Wayne Morse

The U.S. participation in the Vietnam War, which few seemed to support by 1970, found its claim to legitimacy in 1964, when the Senate passed a resolution proposed by President Johnson, to authorize retaliation for attacks on U.S. destroyers by North

Vietnamese gunboats in the Gulf of Tonkin and to provide a mandate for future military action. It passed in 1964 by a vote of 88 to 2. Most Senators who voted in favor of what came to be called the Tonkin Gulf Resolution later claimed they intended to authorize only limited retaliatory action. The two who voted no warned at the time that the wording of the resolution was open-ended and would draw the nation inexorably into the military strategist's greatest nightmare: a full-scale land war in Asia. One of those two lonely prophets was Ernest Gruening of Alaska; the other was Oregon's Wayne Morse.

Before he was elected Senator, Morse had already achieved a distinguished law career. Born in 1900 in Madison, he was graduated from the University of Wisconsin and received law degrees from the University of Minnesota and Columbia. He became a law professor, a leading authority on labor arbitration, and from 1931 to 1944 dean of the University of Oregon Law School. He became a Republican member of the United States Senate in 1945, running into trouble with his party almost immediately for his opposition to their anti-union legislation. He was re-elected as a Republican with labor support (a rare bird) in 1952. The following year he quit the G.O.P. and announced himself an independent, and in 1954 he joined the Democratic Party. He was re-elected, ran for the 1960 Democratic Presidential nomination against John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, and was re-elected again in 1962.

Senator Morse was known for being outspoken and courageous, and he took many positions that were unpopular at the time but in retrospect were in the vanguard of history. He was proud to be called a liberal, stating, "A major objective [of political liberalism] is the protection of the economic weak." He opposed the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947, which he correctly saw would "hamstring" unions. He supported Federal aid for education and for family farmers, and was an early advocate of civil rights legislation.

He opposed all appropriations bills related to the Vietnam War and became a leading critic of interventionist American foreign policy. Like many prophets, he suffered mounting opposition from those in power, and was finally defeated in the election of 1968—even as public opinion was shifting dramatically toward the position he had advocated for four years. By the following year he had achieved widespread recogni-

tion as a national force for peace. In 1970, in the midst of the expansion of the War into Cambodia and just prior to his acceptance of the Award, Wayne Morse received full vindication when the Senate repealed the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, thus ending even the pretext of Congressional authorization for the War. He died in Oregon four years later.

Willard Uphaus

The Award in 1970 also went to Willard Uphaus, at a separate presentation on November 22, the seventh anniversary of the assassination of John F. Kennedy. As always, the Award presentation was held in New York, but this time the location was the Hotel Roosevelt rather than the Community Church. The selection of Dr. Uphaus was a return to the pattern of honoring a Northeastern clergyman-academic-activist, and also reflected a focus less on the New York City peace community and more on the movement closer to P.E.P.'s New Haven area base. Dr. Uphaus had been the Lecturer on Christian Methods at Yale in 1931 and 1932, the leader of World Fellowship of Faiths, and an activist in numerous labor and civil rights organizations. He had been a student and friend of Jerome Davis's in the 1920's and '30's at Yale, and had been selected by Dr. Davis in 1934 to become the first director of the National Religion and Labor Foundation, which Dr. Davis had conceived to develop a progressive coalition of church and union forces.

“On a grey fall morning, November 14, 1958, I climbed slowly up the long flight of steps to the entrance of the Supreme Court building in Washington,” Dr. Uphaus wrote in his autobiography, *Commitment*:

Chiseled high above the entrance are the words, EQUAL JUSTICE UNDER THE LAW. For me these words represented the character and integrity of the nation. Despite reverses in the lower courts I felt an inner serenity and the deep assurance that the voice of conscience had not betrayed me. ... Lower courts had been swayed [against me], I felt, by the fears and passions of troubled times, but now, finally, I would find shelter and security at the hands of the highest interpreters of the constitutional liberties under which I had been nurtured.

Dr. Uphaus's serene ascent to the Supreme Court followed a four-year nightmare that began when he declined to provide a list of the names of the guests of a New Hampshire summer camp. The camp was a program of World Fellowship of Faiths,

of which Dr. Uphaus was the president. Dedicated to encouraging interchange among peoples throughout the world, especially religious believers, the organization was identified by the McCarthyite witch-hunters as a peace organization, and hence as presumably disloyal. The list of names of those who had attended its summer sessions, the reasoning continued, would surely include many Communist sympathizers who could then be pursued, questioned, deprived of work and honor, and possibly prosecuted. And demanding the list was a perfect way of revealing the true character of World Fellowship. If Dr. Uphaus complied, he would presumably be proven loyal, but his organization would be discredited. If not, he would fall victim to the presumption of disloyalty and would be forced into a long court battle to keep his own freedom—which would also likely destroy World Fellowship. The Attorney General of the “Live Free or Die” state subpoenaed the list.

Willard Uphaus refused. Growing up in rural Indiana, he had developed a deep religious faith that expressed itself in a determination to reach out to the poor and the oppressed. He became a professor of religious education and an activist with organizations committed to the social outreach implicit in the Christian message. He sought to make his life an expression of the principle that “as God has given a man the light, so he must act, out of the goodness of his heart, for every other man whatever his race, faith, nationality, or political conviction”.⁹

The State of New Hampshire prosecuted Dr. Uphaus for his failure to turn over the names of his summer camp guests. He was convicted on a contempt charge; he appealed, lost, appealed again, lost again, and was finally granted a hearing by the U.S. Supreme Court. There, after four years of trials and defense work, with his worldly goods and his freedom at stake, he lost his appeal by a four-to-five decision. He was sent to prison for his faith in action.

His fight against government attacks on the freedom of speech and assembly garnered praise in editorials in the *NEW YORK TIMES*, *LIFE* magazine, the *CHRISTIAN CENTURY*, the *PROVIDENCE JOURNAL*, and dozens of other national publications. He was recognized throughout the world as “a man whose efforts to keep open channels

⁹ From a review of *Commitment*.

of communication among peoples of different faiths and creeds led him to prison.”¹⁰ After his release, he continued his work with World Fellowship. He was well known to activists for peace and justice throughout New England. As a long-time citizen of New Haven, and even after his retirement to Florida, he was a good friend of many of those involved with Promoting Enduring Peace.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

Chapter Ten

1971-72: Internationalizing the Award—U Thant

In its first eleven years the Award had been presented to eight New York-New England clergymen and teachers of religion, three outstanding political leaders, a Nobel Prize-winning scientist, a pediatrician, and an industrialist. The range of occupations showed the varied paths that lead to peacemaking, but there was no similar range of nationalities: all were Americans. In 1972 the Board for the first time chose a citizen of another country who was also, as truly as one can say, a citizen of the world: U Thant, the Burmese diplomat who served from 1961 to 1972 as the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

U Thant

Founded in 1945, by 1961 the U.N. had been led by only two men—both Scandinavian. The first, Trygve Lie of Norway, became unacceptable to the Soviet bloc when his nation joined NATO. His successor was Dag Hammarskjöld, a tireless Swede, who brought to the post an electric energy paradoxically enshrouded in meditative mysticism. In 1961 he led a multinational U.N. army to the newly independent Congo (now Zaïre) to disarm the parties to its internal strife. On his way to a crucial meeting on September 18th, he died in a plane crash; he was fifty-six.

His death precipitated a succession crisis that dragged on for six weeks and dramatized the divisions that beset the world's "united" nations. Unhappy with the domination of the U.N. by the United States, the Soviet Union demanded that Hammarskjöld be succeeded by three secretaries-general—a "troika": one from the capitalist bloc, one from the socialist bloc, and one from the growing group of neutral nations. The U.S., its allies, and the non-aligned nations insisted on a single leader; the compromise was that he should serve only as acting secretary general until the expiration of Hammarskjöld's term. "The Afro-Asian countries felt that it was the turn of the Third World, and the Latin Americans joined hands," U Thant wrote later. As the respected representative of the non-aligned nation of Burma, he was elected unanimously November 3rd.

Using a combination of military and diplomatic measures he achieved the Congo cease-fire his predecessor had been seeking. The following year he was elected to a full five-year term, no longer “acting” but fully the Secretary General.

This trial by fire at the beginning of his administration was only a prologue to what followed. During his administration the Cold War reached its peak of hostilities, imperialism receded from the stage of history (but took on more subtle forms), and “lesser” wars raged like brush fires at the edges of a dry forest. The newly-built wall dividing Berlin exemplified the eye-to-eye confrontation of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.; the Cuban Missile Crisis brought the world to the brink of nuclear holocaust; it gave way to the Vietnam War. Through all this and a long list of other trials, a single human being—the Secretary General—was charged with representing the entire world in the struggle not just for peace, but for the survival of civilization.

Background

U Thant was uniquely qualified to be that human being. As a Burman rooted in the tradition of an ancient Asian nation, he represented humanity's long past; as a patriot who had played prominent roles in the emergence of his nation from colonial domination, he stood for humanity's present and future. His values were clear and deeply held; yet his carefully cultivated Buddhist detachment left him free to understand the values and positions of the diametrically opposed camps that bestrode the globe. Sustaining an almost frantic work load since his days at the right hand of Burma's new leadership, he yet held to an inner calm and stayed apart from the many sides clawing for his allegiance. As an educator, journalist, and high civil servant, he had kept close company with partisan leaders yet remained aloof himself from partisanship. Far more than a mere negotiator of compromises, he told an American television audience just before his election that “whoever occupies the office of Secretary General must be impartial, but in regard to moral issues cannot, and should not, remain neutral or passive.” And he had a delicious sense of humor: when told that a French representative found him unsuitable because he was short and spoke no French, he replied mildly that he was taller than Napoleon, who spoke no English. As he wrote in his posthumously published autobiography:

As a Buddhist, I was trained to be tolerant of everything except intolerance. I was brought up not only to develop the spirit of tolerance, but also to cherish moral and spiritual qualities, especially modesty, humility, compassion, and, most important, to attain a certain degree of emotional equilibrium. I was taught to control my emotions through a process of concentration and meditation. Of course, being human... I cannot completely “control” my emotions, but I must say that I am not easily excited or excitable.

His conception of human society was also both ancient and ahead of his time, inspired, he said, by “the ideal of human synthesis... developed by all great religions” and powerfully expressed in modern times by Albert Schweitzer and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. He often quoted Schweitzer’s prayer that “what sorrow cannot be spared us be transfigured into a finer joy, the joy of knowing that we have occupied each his own station in the universe, and that, in that station, we have done as we ought.” Likewise he quoted Chardin’s thoughts about planetary consciousness based on “a universal love [which] is not only psychologically possible [but] is the only complete and final way in which we are able to love.” He himself wrote, “I am conscious of the fact that I am a member of the human race, and I am very jealous of my membership.” This consciousness inspired him to strive for the “great human synthesis” that he considered the U.N.’s implicit goal.

U Thant¹¹ was born in 1909 when Burma was still a province of the British colony of India, and his youth took place against the struggle for Burmese independence—first from Britain, later from the Japanese. His political experience began at age eleven when he participated in a protest against British control of Burmese higher education. He studied from 1926 to 1928 at Rangoon University, where his friends participated in the forbidden Students’ Union there, which became a key to the student strike that set off the open struggle for Burma’s independence. He began his career as a high school teacher at age nineteen, won prizes for translating English literary works into Burmese, and rose to become a supervisor at the National High School. His superinten-

¹¹ Pronounced OO THONT. “U” is a term of respect, like “Mr.,” but denoting mature adulthood. “Thant” rhymes with “font” and literally means “Clean” and also means he was born on a Friday, which has favorable associations within the Burmese culture.

dent and close friend there was U Nu, a young revolutionary who would one day lead his nation. Another superintendent who knew him said later:

It was a difficult job needing lots of diplomatic skill. There were lots of different types of people to keep happy—parents, teachers, students—often with conflicting interests. It was good training for a future Secretary General.

Although he was an advocate for modernization (and to some extent Westernization) of his country, and standing apart from participation in anti-colonial resistance, he became increasingly outspoken about the negative consequences of British rule. In a 1962 speech U Thant recalled the “material accomplishments” of colonialism, such as better schools, hospitals, and infrastructure. “Nevertheless,” he contrasted,

against these substantial benefits must be reckoned many features. ... Chief among them is the fact that ... the primary motive of the colonial power ... was its own commercial profit ... [resulting in] little industrial development. ... The colonizers often kept themselves aloof from native society. Very few of them bothered to learn the language ... or made a real effort to understand the indigenous culture. ... This aloofness and cultural exclusiveness created resentment, particularly in the minds of the educated subject peoples.

As a teacher he particularly deplored the repression in education: “Freedom of speech and of opinion are of course not dreamt of in our schools, since they are held to be much too dangerous.” For such expressions he was blocked in his teaching career.

Burma, nestled between giant India and giant China, was heavily influenced by the anti-colonial struggles going on in her two sister nations. In parallel with Gandhi's revolution of nonviolence in India, Burma's struggle for independence, with Buddhist monks as heroes and a growing alliance of the middle class and the masses, grew into strikes and, by 1930, riots and uprisings. U Thant was the first Burmese to join the Left Wing Book Club, a British group, and in 1937 joined U Nu's Red Dragon Book Club, which translated books with political relevance into Burmese. Marxism, as an alien doctrine irrelevant to what had been a basically classless rural society, was unappealing; liberalism and socialism did inspire the growing Burmese nationalist movement. Their program became: first struggle, then mobilization, and finally revolt.

The outbreak of war among the European powers in 1939 seemed to provide Burma an opportunity to negotiate for true independence. Instead, fearing the loss of their

strategic conduit to China, the British clamped down on the nationalists by imprisoning U Nu and other movement leaders. The Japanese invaded Burma eight days after their victory at Pearl Harbor, and brought an end to British rule, attracting thousands of Burmese volunteers who hailed them as Asian liberators. Chinese forces under American command invaded northern Burma; the country filled with panic, refugees, destruction, and death. In the midst of the chaos, ethnic conflict broke out and caused mass slaughter. Burma became little more than a springboard for the Japanese into India, and a conduit for British-American supplies into China. A Japanese regime based on torture and ruthless suppression, aided by Burmese informers and collaborators, descended over the country.

Released from a British prison, U Nu became a top minister in the new puppet government and induced U Thant to prepare a report on how the new post-colonial educational system should be designed. While apparently complying, U Thant began secretly defying Japanese law in such ways as retaining a short-wave radio for receiving independent news about the war and undermining the compulsory teaching of Japanese in the schools he supervised. U Nu, ostensibly a collaborationist official, became a top leader of the resistance movement. A Burmese government in exile formed and launched a resistance movement within the country, to which U Thant secretly supplied rice. (He fell under Japanese suspicion a few weeks before the end of the war, which put his life in peril.)

Amidst the devastation left in the wake of the Japanese retreat, and in the vacuum created by the end of Japanese rule in 1945, U Nu's party became a broad front of center and left groups united to resist the resumption of British rule. The struggle was aided by the formation of the United Nations, whose charter—at the insistence of the United States—was strongly anti-colonialist, and by the fall of Churchill and the rise of the Labor Party in Britain. By July 1947 Burma was just five months away from being truly independent for the first time since 1884, and democratic for the first time ever, under a Governing Council that included U Nu. Tragically, a rival politician ambushed and assassinated the entire Governing Council in its chambers; by a fluke, only U Nu escaped. He was invited by the British to form a new government that

would take power after the British departure; he accepted, inviting his friend U Thant to become his party's press officer.

U Thant was averse to joining any political party, and was intent on an independent journalistic career; but given his fluency in both Burmese and English, together with the need to assure the public that Burma's independence was on course, he took the position that made him the spokesperson of the new government. As such he ardently advocated parliamentary democracy: "It substitutes reason and persuasion for force... Democracy is the keystone of the arch of human freedom."

Soon he became deputy to the Secretary of the Information Ministry and Director of Broadcasting, and embarked on a history of the political party he now served. In 1949 he took his boss's place as supervisor of the government's official publications. In 1952 U Nu appointed him chairman of the Burma Film Board, which judged the nation's films and made awards to the best of them. He was also responsible for censoring American and Soviet propaganda, but though he found each version oversimplified and distorted, he left the material alone out of his commitment to freedom of speech.

Adroitly evading the bureaucratic intrigue near the top of the government, U Thant was content to be "the man behind the scenes", preferring to work out compromises rather than win victories, and never contending to gather political power for himself. As liaison to foreign correspondents in Burma, he impressed them with "his strenuous efforts to help us" and his "charming and friendly" and "efficient" manner, in the words of one British correspondent. As part of his job he learned to scan and digest great quantities of information. In all these ways he was unknowingly being prepared for his work on the world stage.

Beginning in 1948 both the Burmese Communists and ethnic separatist groups began insurgency movements against the infant government. In the battles that ensued, U Thant's village was burned to the ground; the flames took his ancestral home, his writings and records, his family photographs and heirlooms, and his modest assets. U Thant was sent by U Nu into the thick of the fighting and thence behind enemy lines, to open negotiations. After he returned he wrote pamphlets to be air-dropped over rebel territory. He also wrote speeches U Nu delivered to reassure the people.

U Nu was at the same time exploring his country's options internationally. Burma became a member of the United Nations in 1948. When Britain and the United States rejected his idea for a Pacific Alliance independent of control by the Western powers, he decided that the proper course for Burma was neutralism. Had he decided otherwise, U Thant would not have been acceptable as U.N. Secretary-General.

In 1950 U Thant accompanied U Nu on a good will mission to India, and the following year led missions on his own to Indonesia, Thailand, and England. In 1952 he became a member of the Burmese delegation to the United Nations, soon rising to the position of Burma's Permanent Representative. As such he was U Nu's instrument in the U.N.'s unfolding dramas of world affairs, but he was able to do so in a way that won the respect of all three blocs of nations. By 1961, when it became clear that only a Third World representative would be acceptable to all three blocs, he was the only serious candidate during all the negotiations over who should succeed Dag Hammarskjöld.

U Thant, Secretary General

More than anything, his pre-eminence for the position came about because of his years of developing an over-arching impartiality toward the contending philosophies of capitalism and communism that were then vying for humanity's allegiance while simultaneously threatening its survival. The differences rending the nations he saw as transient, not arising from some in-born and insurmountable differences. "I question whether tension or conflict between one people and another ever arises from conflicting viewpoints in their respective cultures... Conflicts between nations or individuals generally arise, not out of different viewpoints in their civilizations, not from reasons of their traditions and history, but from uncivilized elements in their character." That outlook inspired his view that his job "was not only to bring about a détente between differing nations, but also to eliminate the obstacles to such a détente."

He himself considered that "the outstanding difference that distinguished me from all other Secretaries General of the League of Nations or of the United Nations lay in the fact that I was the first non-European to occupy that post. ... Not only do I have my own set of values, which are different from those of all my [European] predeces-

sors, but I also had first-hand experience of colonialism at work. I know what hunger, poverty, disease, illiteracy, and human suffering really mean.”

As he learned his way around the corridors of the U.N. skyscraper and its surrounding diplomatic environs, he found himself “increasingly identified with the cause of small nations, poor nations, newly independent nations, and nations struggling for independence,” he wrote. “So my conception of the United Nations was primarily from the vantage point of the Third World.” In the late 'fifties he became chairman of the U.N.'s Afro-Asian Standing Committee on Algerian Independence (Algeria was then a French colony) and a leader in the struggle against colonialism and imperialism within the U.N.

During his first term as Secretary-General he was a key influence in achieving some measure of peace amidst the chaos in Africa that followed the withdrawal of the colonial powers. In 1961 alone the Congo (later Zaïre and Rwanda), Sierra Leone, Tanganyika (later Tanzania), South Africa, Angola, and Algeria either became independent or underwent crises in the struggle for independence. Meanwhile that same year South Korea and the Dominican Republic were seized in military coups, China split from the Soviet Union, the Berlin Wall went up, and Cuba was invaded by a U.S.-sponsored expatriate army. All of these headline grabbers, and a host of lesser crises, became items on the to-do list of the new head of the world's confederation of nations.

Reflecting in later years on his accomplishments in building bridges and mediating conflicts, he considered his greatest success to be what he did to forestall World War III during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, when he provided the two superpowers the time needed to negotiate a solution. In 1965 he was able to focus the world's attention on the U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic, and in 1967 on the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Nearly as significant were his efforts to mediate the savage conflict between India and Pakistan in 1965, thus ameliorating a disastrous regional and religious blood-letting. Not to be forgotten is his role in alleviating the less memorable conflicts of the Netherlands vs. Indonesia, the Philippines vs. Malaysia, Spain vs. Guinea, Guinea vs. the Ivory Coast, Saudi Arabia vs. both Egypt and Yemen, Morocco vs. both Al-

geria and Mauritania, Ruanda vs. Burundi, Thailand vs. Cambodia, Nigeria vs. most of its neighbors, and both South Africa and Rhodesia vs. the rest of Africa. "In terms of world public interest," he wrote, "these were relatively minor disputes, but to the peoples and nations concerned, they were of vital importance."

One of his most significant achievements happened late in his career. In 1970 a dispute between Britain and Iran that was headed toward armed conflict was settled via a pledge by the parties involved to abide by whatever determination he reached at the conclusion of his mediation, provided that the Security Council concurred. Such a mutual yielding of sovereignty to the good offices of the world's best attempt at planetary government was a milestone on the long journey toward the "human synthesis". The U.N., he said, is much more than a debating society: "it is the cumulative result of massive public opinion."

In his second term, from 1967 to 1972, he was the Moses of modern peacemakers, pointing the way to resolutions whose culmination he himself would not live to see. At the end of his life he wrote of his notable failures: the Arab-Israeli conflict (including the Six-Day War in 1967); Cyprus vs. Turkey; the tragic divisions caused by the British domination of Northern Ireland; the racist domination of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Angola, and South Africa; the isolation of China; and the war between the United States and Vietnam. He had no way of knowing that his work would contribute to breakthroughs not long afterward in every one of them.

U Thant and Vietnam

His "failure" regarding Vietnam is perhaps the most poignant and, to one participant, the most damning. As early as 1964, U Thant spoke out against the war in Vietnam. He said the problem there "is "not essentially military, it is political; and therefore political and diplomatic means alone... can solve it." Such statements were daring, because the matter had not then been brought before the United Nations. Underlying them was his conviction that the American conduct of the war was immoral. "One does not have to be a pacifist [which U Thant definitely was not] to condemn the napalming and dropping of antipersonnel bombs on hamlets from thirty-five thousand feet above," he wrote in 1972. "All wars are basically alike, but modern war is nothing less than mass murder. Though the murderers today are not intrinsically more

wicked than their grandfathers, their new weapons now change their status in the business of killing from the retail to the wholesale category.” [How much more true does this ring after the U.S. “war” on Iraq in 1991.]

As the fighting escalated and spread like a fog of death over the hills, plains, and deltas of Southeast Asia, U Thant became increasingly outspoken, and increasingly intense in his efforts to establish some basis for ending the war. He met with every world leader who might be helpful, including President Lyndon Johnson twice. Of Johnson he wrote, “I do not remember having met any head of state... so informal and so warm toward me, and at the same time so juvenile in his concept of international developments.” Under the most severe constraints of secrecy he worked for years to arrange direct talks between the primary combatants, the U.S. and North Vietnam. What he called his secret search for peace in Vietnam nearly succeeded when he set up talks to begin in Burma in September of 1964. Publicly the U.S. responded favorably, through Adlai Stevenson, then the U.S. ambassador to the U.N; the Ho Chi Minh government, through Stevenson’s Soviet counterpart, did likewise. But the talks were never held. LOOK magazine revealed in November 1965 that Washington had rejected the talks. Stevenson said the State Department had decided against it, but in a meeting after Stevenson’s sudden death in 1965, President Lyndon Johnson led U Thant to believe that he had not even been consulted, and the State Department shifted the entire blame onto Stevenson. Shortly after the U.S. rejection, the bombing of North Vietnam began, making such talks impossible from North Vietnam’s perspective.

(The Secretary General had great admiration for Stevenson, as well as other American statesmen with whom he worked, such Cyrus Vance and Ralph Bunche.¹² He also, frequently throughout his official life, expressed the highest regard for the principles of American democracy as embodied in the U.S. Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, and was frank in his own preference for representative democracy over “any form of totalitarianism”. Such affiliations and expressions caused the leaders of some Communist nations to regard him as, in his words, “an

¹² After U Thant’s retirement in 1972 it was the Adlai Stevenson Institute of International Affairs that provided the senior fellowship and paid for the assistants that facilitated the writing

American stooge”, which he deeply resented and which his even-handedness continually belied.)

In early 1965, as the massive bombing spread, U Thant outraged Washington by stating:

I am sure that the great American people, if only they knew the true facts and the background to the developments in South Vietnam, will agree with me that further bloodshed is unnecessary. The political and diplomatic method of discussion and negotiation alone can create conditions which will enable the United States to withdraw gracefully from that part of the world. As you know, in times of war and of hostilities, the first casualty is truth.

Later that same year he termed the conflict in Vietnam “a war more violent, more cruel, more damaging to human life and property, more harmful to relations among the great powers, and more perilous to the whole world, than at any other time during the generation of conflict that country has known.”

In March 1965 he proposed a simple three-step plan for peace: stop the bombing; de-escalate all military activities by all parties within South Vietnam; and hold peace talks between all combatants—the U.S., North Vietnam, the South Vietnamese government, and the South Vietnamese insurgent forces (the National Liberation Front). Hanoi’s response was that the withdrawal of U.S. forces was a prerequisite to talks. “As for the United States,” wrote U Thant, “it rejected steps one and three, only to accept them five years later, after tens of thousands of more deaths and untold devastation.” Two years later he presented another plan involving a “general standstill truce”, talks between the U.S. and North Vietnam, and the reconvening of the Geneva Conference. He continued his efforts despite all the obstacles—the most insurmountable of which was that Ho Chi Minh had no doubt that his forces would eventually win, and the U.S. government could not conceive that the Americans could ever lose.

During a 1966 speech in Atlantic City, the Secretary General called for a neutral Vietnam. He said “there is growing evidence that the so-called ‘fight for democracy’ is no longer relevant to the realities of the situation.”

Twenty years of outside intervention and the presence of a succession of foreign armies have so profoundly affected Vietnamese political life that it seems

illusory to represent it as a mere contest between communism and liberal democracy. ... What is really at stake... is the independence, the identity, and the survival of the country itself.

He also rejected the U.S. administration's "domino theory" and implicitly argued against any intervention by great powers in the affairs of other nations on the grounds that "the destiny of every country is shaped by its own peculiar circumstances, its national characteristics, its historical background, and its own political philosophy." He knew the leaders in Hanoi well enough to be certain that they were "obsessed with the principle of non-alignment." Consequently he could not see how an independent Vietnam could be a threat to the vital interests and security of the West.

As he pressed toward the breakthrough that would lead to the onset of the Paris peace talks in 1968, his outrage about the savagery of the continuing escalation of the war by the U.S. mounted. In June of that year, without indicting the U.S. directly, he spoke out:

... I find it difficult to express adequately the strong sense of repugnance to all established standards and norms of civilized society that the continuance of this savage war evokes. I do not see how one can build a democratic government or a stable society over huge graveyards and with the participation of enormous refugee camps.

He diplomatically held his tongue after peace talks began in Paris, to keep the air as clear as possible, but when President Nixon precipitated the invasion of Cambodia in 1970, he spoke out again:

...One country that had been trying very hard to keep itself neutral seems now to have been drawn into the conflict. ... If the parties involved do not take urgent, decisive, and courageous measures toward peace, it will become increasingly difficult to end a war that constitutes a threat not only for the peoples of Indo-China but for the whole of mankind.

The Secretary General also referred to "the staggering cost of the war:"

as of this writing, 53,813 Americans killed... and 153,302 seriously wounded... 932,793 Communists have been killed. ...The overall cost of the Vietnam war [to the U.S.] would be around \$676 billion¹³... It is difficult to visualize what

¹³ Current estimates are at least triple that number.

advantage the United States and the American taxpayer have achieved by these astronomical expenses both in manpower and money.

He did not live to see the conclusion of the Paris talks, the fall of Saigon, and the emergence of the fiercely non-aligned Vietnam he had predicted consistently throughout the 'sixties. As much as a Moses, he was also a Cassandra.

U.N. Financial Distress

“The Secretary General’s world has two poles: at one extreme the idealism and global objectives of the Charter, and at the other, the pragmatic and... unconcealed selfish nature of national sovereignty.” The latter pole is what makes the Secretary General’s job so exceedingly trying, and perhaps the most tangible manifestation is the difficulty of getting member nations to pay their U.N. contributions. Though there are continual objections about U.N. inefficiency, profligacy, and bias, the U.N.’s continual financial crises result from the lack of respect member nations have for the organization, and from its inability compel their support through the usual source of the power to tax: the force of arms. This or that nation expresses its dissatisfaction by withholding financial support, especially in reference to costly military operations. Other nations note that they can save money by following that example, or feel foolish contributing their full shares when others are giving nothing. And so it goes, time and again bringing the world’s primary machinery for peace to the brink of extinction.

At the beginning of U Thant’s time as Secretary General, it was the Soviet Union that had fallen two years behind in its assessments. U.S. politicians, among others, were pointing out that, according to the U.N. Charter, the Soviet Union should lose its vote in the General Assembly. (France was in the same situation.) An immense amount of the Secretary General’s time during his decade of service was consumed in cajoling nations to make the payments to which they were committed, selling special bonds to cover financial gaps, and seeking voluntary contributions in addition to the regular assessments, from the developed nations.

After all of his efforts, he was still moved to write in his introduction to the final annual report of his administration that “the United Nations, after ten or more years of deficit financing... must very soon face the fact that it is a bankrupt organization.” He left office with the feeling that “the financial outlook... still remained bleak,” given

an accumulated deficit in excess of \$110 million, not counting outstanding bond debt of about \$100 million. He would no doubt have been disheartened to know that, thirty-five years later, that debt is seventeen times greater—over \$3.5 billion—and that the United States, which worked very hard to deny the Soviet Union its General Assembly vote for non-payment of its assessments in 1965, is now by a huge measure the largest debtor.¹⁴ By that most tangible measure, the “human synthesis” of which U Thant dreamed remains a long way off.

The Cuban Missile Crisis

The most graphic way to glimpse the ways U Thant used his position for promoting an enduring peace is to consider his role in the solution of the Cuban Missile Crisis. Though this event occurred toward the beginning of his service as Secretary General, it was unquestionably the most significant example of peacemaking because it was, to our knowledge, the most dangerous single political event in history. What might have happened without U Thant and the United Nations?

By 1961 the Cuban Revolution had triumphed, ending five hundred years of foreign domination—direct colonial control by Spain and indirect neo-colonial control by the United States. The administrations of Dwight Eisenhower and John Kennedy had turned a cold shoulder to Castro, while welcoming Batista, the bloody dictator he overthrew, into the bosom of the United States. An escalating round of economic attacks and counter-attacks between the U.S. and Cuba culminated in the expropriation of U.S.-owned assets, a total economic embargo against Cuba by the U.S. and its allies, and the breaking of diplomatic relations. The United States was Cuba's primary market and the source of most of its imports; an economic embargo meant the quick collapse of the nation.

Cuba immediately established an economic relationship with the Soviet Union that ensured its survival; a military alliance soon developed, constituting the first significant challenge to the U.S. Monroe Doctrine and bringing the mortal enemy of the U.S. to its very doorstep. In April of 1961, the United States, after repeated threats of the utmost bellicosity to the sovereignty of Cuba, sponsored an invasion of the island

¹⁴ President Clinton made a campaign promise in 1996 to address the situation after his reelection, with the intention of paying what is owed.

by anti-Castro exiles financed and trained by the C.I.A. When it failed, President Kennedy solemnly promised that the Castro government would be brought down by any means necessary. An escalation in acts of sabotage against Cuba followed, together with multiple attempts on Castro's life by U.S. agents. It seemed that a full-scale U.S. invasion could be only months away.

Cuba and the Soviet Union agreed that the presence of Soviet nuclear weapons within Cuba was the only certain counter to the threat of a U.S. invasion, and thus the only feasible way to ensure Cuba's sovereignty. Construction of missile bases began and Soviet missiles were brought in without any announcement or consultation with the U.S., though it was well known that the U.S. maintained close surveillance of every square foot of Cuba using its spy planes and ultra-accurate cameras.

When Kennedy was informed in mid-October 1962 of the construction of the missile bases, his reaction was far more extreme than expected by Khrushchev. After all, the U.S. had ringed Soviet territory with nuclear missile bases, and had recently established such bases in Turkey (within sight of Premier Khrushchev's Black Sea vacation home) without prior consultation with the Soviets. U Thant himself later wrote,

“My judgment was that Cuba was fully within its rights to ask for and receive the missiles and bombers from a Big Power, in the same way that Turkey, Pakistan, Thailand, and Japan (Okinawa), on the perimeters of Communist countries, were fully within their rights to act similarly. The only difference was that while the latter... received the missiles and bombers openly from the United States, Cuba received them secretly from the Soviet Union.”

U Thant was concerned on October 20th to learn that Soviet nuclear missiles were being stationed in Cuba, but he was stunned at the U.S. reaction. He considered Kennedy's televised statement the evening of October 22nd “the grimmest and gravest speech ever made by a head of state. ...The President's militant thrust at the Soviet Union as the party responsible for the crisis, and his unconcealed commitment to act alone against the missile threat to his country, came as a thunderbolt.” To a worldwide audience Kennedy declared on live television that U.S. military forces were surrounding the island to prevent any offensive military equipment from reaching Cuba and would board and search any ship bound for Cuba for such equipment, and he

called on Khrushchev to remove the missiles to “move the world back from the abyss of destruction.

“I could scarcely believe my eyes and ears,” U Thant wrote later. He could not conceive why Kennedy had not communicated his demand privately to Khrushchev, to avoid the absolute public showdown that was now upon them, in which one side must “win” and the other must “lose”—or perhaps cause the whole world to be the loser. He wondered if “the United States, the most powerful country in the world, [was] prepared to plunge the world into a nuclear holocaust. Never before had the lives of so many millions around the world been at the mercy of two men who had the power to make the ultimate decision. I was more deeply troubled than I had ever been in my life. ... I wondered whether the President’s vigor and vitality... were reassuring or frightening.” He also felt that unilateral military action by the United States, with no prior consultation with or even notice to the U.N. Security Council, was a reckless negation of the constituted function of that body.

Further, the Cuban government, knowing full well that the U.S. had the means to easily detect the new missile bases, had announced to the U.N. General Assembly on October 8th that “were the United States able to give us proof, by word and deed, that it would not carry out aggression against our country, then, we declare solemnly before you here and now, our weapons would be unnecessary and our army redundant.” U Thant wrote later,

“The significance of [this] statement... cannot be overemphasized. In effect, he had pledged to remove the weapons that the United States regarded as offensive... The United States should have taken advantage of that solemn statement and promptly declared that it would not carry out aggression against Cuba. In my opinion, that statement made President Kennedy’s ultimatum unnecessary, and it only brought the world to the brink of a nuclear war.

With the passing of the Cold War it is difficult for many today to comprehend why the stationing of weapons in a neighboring country could so incite a nation that it would consider precipitating the destruction of civilization to be a rational response. But the doctrine of “mutually assured destruction”—“MAD”—depended on demonstrating the willingness to actually use nuclear weapons to defend the strategic inter-

ests of the United States—which alone among nuclear powers has never agreed to refrain from being the first to initiate a nuclear attack.

Equally important, Kennedy's own power derived heavily from his stance as the militant leader of the capitalist struggle to eradicate communism, exemplified by his pledge to "pay any price, bear any burden, support any friend, oppose any foe" to prevail in that struggle. A principal element of his campaign for President had been his allegation that the U.S. was falling behind the Soviet Union militarily, bolstered by the demonstrated Soviet superiority in missile-based space technology. For him to permit the stationing of nuclear missiles so near U.S. territory—especially after the failed invasion the year before—almost certainly would have meant his fall. Unfortunately, the same was true of Khrushchev. For him to accede to Kennedy's unconditional, public demand would have been equally damaging. (In fact, Khrushchev did fall less than two years afterward, partly because of his role in the Cuban Missile Crisis; Kennedy too fell just seven months before him.)

The bipolar tensions were such that each of the two great adversaries looked upon any significant symbolic loss as a threat to its prestige and thus its entire struggle to line up and hold allies in its camp. Such a loss, it was thought, could upset the delicate balance and start the fall of dominoes that would lead to the death of one or another social system. U Thant found it ironic that the Western powers, so prone to smirk at Asian cultures for being obsessed with "face", were so ready to go to war to keep from losing any of it themselves. (This same logic of the necessity to "pay any price, bear any burden" would later hold the United States in Vietnam long after any hope of victory remained.)

Given that neither side could consider yielding, it is possible to envision at least three scenarios leading to nuclear war. In the first scenario, Soviet ships resist U.S. attempts to board and inspect them, as Kennedy had already ordered; military action ensues and escalates, as the Soviets rush to defend their forces on the high seas and the U.S. reinforces its own efforts, until the use of tactical nukes begins and leads to full-scale nuclear war. In the second, the United States bombs the Soviet bases in Cuba, possibly backing up the bombing with an invasion by U.S. Marines; it is a matter of historical record that the U.S. made preparations for this course, and recently it was

revealed that Soviet commanders in Cuba had the authority to launch missiles against U.S. forces or cities in response, and had decided fight to the death rather than to surrender. The third scenario is simply that one side or the other would anticipate one of the previous scenarios and launch a preemptive strategic strike against its enemy. No doubt there are other equally likely scenarios; it seems the paths to war are many and wide, while the way to peace is a narrow trail.

The Secretary General's Role in Crisis: Seven Aspects

What could be the role of the Secretary General of the United Nations once the ultimate crisis had begun? It is reasonable to suggest that U Thant's response was completely different from what another Secretary General's would have been. Another might have joined the public fray with harsh condemnations of this or that side, demands for immediate disengagement, calls for some sort of military counteraction from other world powers—who knows what panic might have been produced. As a curtain of terror descended over the world, U Thant's carefully cultivated detachment kept his head clear and his tone of voice level. His predecessors had already established the U.N. as the place to which the two sides of the Cold War appealed for their moral justification, and the enormous consequences of any misstep caused the adversaries to turn to U Thant as two gang leaders on the verge of a rumble might turn to a trusted social worker to intervene and stop the bravado before blood is spilled. So this was the first aspect of the role of the Secretary General as defined by U Thant: to be the calm center in the midst of the storm.

The second aspect of his role was to be the "switchboard" for communications to and from all parties. The United Nations was the only place in the world at which all parties to a crisis could be contacted personally, and the Secretary General was the one person with universal ambassadorial status, with whom every nation could communicate directly. As debate began in the Security Council on October 23rd, he initiated contacts on his own behind the scenes with the U.S., the Soviet Union, and Cuba, through their respective U.N. ambassadors ("Permanent Representatives" in U.N. terminology). His office was also the destination for hundreds of cables and letters from heads of nations, some criticizing the U.S. for its "illegal and chauvinistic action," others attacking the Soviet Union for its "dangerous nuclear gamble," and still

others simply expressing “the hope that the United Nations could resolve the crisis.” Many Latin American governments protested the introduction of nuclear weapons into their continent. Forty-five nations formally requested that he personally “intervene in the titanic conflict,” (as he wrote later), “in order to avert the coming catastrophe.” Urgent messages came to him from prominent peace activists as well; Linus Pauling [GPA '62] cabled, “I strongly urge that you strive to prevent the great immorality and illegality of an armed invasion of Cuba by the overwhelmingly powerful United States.”

The third aspect of his role was to create time and space for a peaceful way to emerge—a “breathing spell,” as he put it. In his contacts with the three parties to the crisis he was perfectly impartial, yet he was anything but neutral about the need to halt the menacing course of events. Many urged him to condemn the United States for its unilateral action of quarantining a sovereign U.N. member state in the absence of a war situation, in accordance with international law and the U.N. Charter; he refused. Instead he appealed “to both sides for a moratorium of two to three weeks” during which the Soviet Union would suspend its arms shipments, the United States would refrain from attempting to board, search, or otherwise interfere with ships bound for Cuba, and Cuba would suspend the further construction of “major military facilities and installations”, i.e. the missiles and launching sites. Khrushchev cabled his immediate acceptance. Kennedy at first refused, then agreed. Castro refused unless the U.S. ceased all aggressive actions, but invited U Thant to come to Cuba to discuss the situation directly; the latter accepted the invitation, expressing hope for a solution that would guarantee Cuba’s sovereignty while reassuring the countries that felt threatened by the missiles in Cuba. (This was a reference to Cuba’s earlier pledge that such weapons would be rendered unnecessary by a U.S. pledge to forswear aggression toward Cuba.)

The fourth aspect of his role was to be the world’s prime negotiator, and in that capacity he held repeated meetings with the representatives of the three nations throughout the duration of the crisis. That role often put him in harm’s way, and sometimes made him, in effect if not in actuality, the world’s prime hostage.

The fifth aspect of his role was to represent formally, as no national representative could, the interests of not one nation or bloc, but for humanity. He spoke as the secular equivalent of the Pope, with persuasion and rationality rather than armies and riches empowering his words. Addressing the Security Council at the conclusion of the debate, he announced his efforts for a moratorium by the three nations and expressed the universal hope that “good sense and understanding will be placed above the anger of the moment or the pride of nations.”

On the fifth and sixth days of the crisis, during which the largest peace demonstration directed at the U.N. up to that time filled the street below his office, U Thant received word that Kennedy and Khrushchev had agreed that the Soviet Union would withdraw its missiles from Cuba in exchange for the U.S. guarantee never to allow another invasion of Cuba.¹⁵ Thus, what could possibly have been achieved privately by a U.S. response to Cuba's offer of October 8th was achieved openly after five days of worldwide nuclear terror. However avoidable that terror may have been, the United States and the Soviet Union never again let themselves come so close to the outbreak of direct military conflict. Though the Cold War would drag on for another thirty years and consume trillions more dollars in military expenditures and millions of lives in regional conflicts and other human costs, U Thant had helped the world survive the true crucible of that titanic contest. Khrushchev welcomed his initiatives for peace, while Kennedy hailed “the efforts of the... Secretary General of the United Nations as having greatly facilitated” the process of achieving a solution.

The sixth aspect of U Thant's role was to ensure, through the focused application of his highly developed skills of persuasion and negotiation, that the agreement for solving the crisis was actually carried out. To this end he flew to Havana on October 28th and held direct talks with Fidel Castro about the removal of the missiles. “The Premier [Castro] asked me whether the demand of the United States for the dismantling of the launching pads in Cuba was based on right or on a position of might. I answered that it was not based on right, but based on apprehension.” When Castro

¹⁵ The precarious process by which this solution was reached, involving direct interchanges between the White House and the Kremlin, is not especially relevant to this brief discussion of U Thant's role as peacemaker. It turned out that there was also a secret agreement that the U.S. would also withdraw its missiles in Turkey, which in fact happened the following year.

pressed for the conditions necessary to a long-term solution to the threat the United States posed, including an end to the economic embargo, the cessation of subversive and aggressive acts, and the removal of the hostile U.S. base in Guantanamo, U Thant “stressed the interim character of the solution I was seeking, since I had no mandate to discuss long-term solutions. ... [and] that what was necessary at the moment was to avert a terrible catastrophe. ... I reiterated my position that no United Nations action could be undertaken on Cuban soil without the consent of its government...” Thus he succeeded in confining the issue to what could readily be resolved.

When Castro rebuffed U.S. demands for U.N. inspection to verify that the missiles had in fact been removed, on the basis that the Soviet pledge was as much to be trusted as the U.S. pledge not to invade Cuba, the Secretary General simply stated that he would pass the response on to the Security Council; this problem was later resolved by the tacit permission of Cuba to allow low-flying U.S. surveillance planes to do their own inspecting. Thus, by side-stepping this less critical matter, he allowed a resolution to emerge on its own as events unfolded.

Castro continued to express his dissatisfaction with an interim solution that did not address the root causes that would make a long-term peace in the Caribbean possible. He indicated that he would express his feelings in a speech to the Cuban people, challenging the Soviets’ position on inspections within Cuba. Sensing that the speech could set back the resolution, U Thant earnestly urged Castro to avoid a provocative broadcast by deleting its inflammatory passages, and the Premier “at last promised it would be a ‘mild one’.” It turned out to be “one of the most moderate speeches ever made” by Castro, according to U Thant’s observer, in which Castro read the full transcript of his meeting with U Thant and described him as “sincere and impartial, desirous of finding a solution to these problems. ...U Thant respects the rights of our country.” Thus, by pinpointing and then neutralizing a possible setback in advance, the Secretary General maintained the momentum of the resolution of the crisis.

The seventh, and in some ways the most important aspect of the way U Thant defined the Secretary General’s role was his almost instinctive way, unlike his immediate predecessor, of diverting attention from himself, so that the focus was continually on the process and the parties to whatever crisis was at hand. This tendency was exempli-

fied in 1965 when he received official but private notification that he could expect to receive the upcoming Nobel Peace Prize. He turned it down on the basis that he did not deserve it for simply doing his job as Secretary General. (How many other public officials have accepted it simply for doing theirs?) He was gratified when the Committee responded by presenting the Prize to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). That same year he stated,

Reaching a compromise is an art, not a formula. You have to take the rights and wrongs of both sides into consideration and feel your way to a solution that is fair to them and all the other people affected by the decision. There are rarely only two sides to any problem.

The 1972 Award Ceremony

U Thant retired following the end of his second full term in 1971 at the age of 62. He received the Award on February 24th of the following year at the Community Church of New York.

The evening event marked the reappearance of the carved wooden statue of Gandhi, which somehow had been misplaced; Dr. Davis discovered that it had been on display in the lobby of the New York City office of the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church for some time. After a buffet supper (for which there were over a hundred reservations) and a violin solo by Orion Mehus accompanied by pianist Annabelle Sonkin, the Rev. Donald Harrington, as the senior minister, gave the invocation as he often did. Jerome Davis, as founder and executive director emeritus, made announcements and remarks. Dr. Carl Soule, a P.E.P. Board member active in support of the United Nations, presented the Gandhi medal, which at Dr. Davis's direction had been plated in gold leaf. Ruth Gage Colby, as a Board member and P.E.P.'s representative to the Non-Governmental Agency (N.G.O.) forum of the U.N., presented the certificate. U Thant gave the keynote address.

Though no record of his address to the Gandhi Peace Award ceremony remains in P.E.P.'s files, it is likely that he paraphrased some thoughts from the conclusion he was then preparing for the memoirs of his career as Secretary General:

...The issue facing mankind is not primarily the contest between communism and democracy. The more essential issue is the division of the world into the

prosperous and the abject poor, the weak and the strong, the ruler and the ruled, the master race and the subhuman.

...The postwar world witnessed two revolts—the revolt for political freedom and, at the same time, the revolt of the have-nots. Over the centuries, black- and brown-skinned humanity had accepted “the white man’s burden”, and at the same time, had been willing to accept poverty as a fact of life. The fifteen years that elapsed between the end of World War II and the beginning of the sixties were marked by a categorical rejection of this concept.

...With the launching of the Development Decade by the General Assembly at the end of 1961, all member states and their peoples were to intensify their efforts during the 1960s to halt and reverse the increasing gap... between the rich and poor. ...The United Nations, for the first time in history, provided mankind with mechanisms that would seek to improve the life of every man, woman, and child on earth. This was a goal perhaps more revolutionary than any political revolution in history.

The First Development Decade has been called by some a modest success, by others a disappointment and a failure. If the results are measured in terms of growth and assistance alone, then the decade was a dismal failure. ...The net flow of financial aid to developing countries declined from 0.79 percent of the gross national product in 1960 to about 0.66 percent in 1969.... Words were spoken, gestures were made, but the sense of clear commitment seemed to be absent.

...If I feel that peace and justice have been desperately slow in coming to humanity, at least some significant progress has been made in other fields. ... Priorities for development were more clearly defined than before. In particular, international economic cooperation and the United Nations itself were greatly strengthened during the decade. ... By preventing incapacity and death... the anti-malaria campaign [of the U.N. World Health Organization] has broken the vicious circle of poverty and disease in many areas of the world. ... Dramatic progress had been made [by the W.H.O.] in eradicating small pox.¹⁶ ...The scientific and technological bases for an abundant food supply are indeed available. ... Important developments in the field of human rights included the adoption of the declaration concerning the elimination of *apartheid*

¹⁶ In 1977 the world’s last known natural case of smallpox was reported in Somalia. Through U.N. efforts the disease that once killed two million people and disfigured thirteen million more each year has been eradicated. The only remaining live specimens known, in the custody of the United States and the Russian Federation, are to be destroyed in June 1999.

[from] South Africa¹⁷... Developing countries have also been able to rely increasingly on the financial institutions of the United Nations system for development assistance. ... Some of the results [of U.N.-aided projects] are: clean water running in villages, children freed from hunger and early death, employment of more people, greater access to consumer goods, sewers in cities, and better crops, schools, universities, hospitals, and roads in developing countries. ...[The] bridge between North and South, between the rich and the poor... is growing stronger with the passage of time. ...Part of the struggle for economic and social betterment is waged under the common flag of the United Nations.

...Artificial earth satellites now serve as meteorological observing platforms, and high-speed electronic computers permit weather prediction.... [But] enthusiasm for the potential benefits of modern scientific and technological advances [has] been tempered by a growing realization that these wondrous tools are also increasing man's capacity to destroy the human and natural resources of the earth. It has become quite clear that a unified global endeavor to control and preserve man and his environment is urgently required. ... The preservation of mankind's cultural heritage is another of the many areas in which international action has proved feasible and successful during recent years.

It is a sad fact... that most member states use the machinery of the United Nations only when they feel that their own interests will be served by such use, or when all unilateral efforts at a solution have failed. In most cases, the United Nations has been by-passed in the settlement of international disputes, particularly by the Big Powers, when those disputes were within their own spheres of influence.

...The World Organization that I tried to serve for over a decade is not merely a hallowed name, to be lauded or by-passed as national policies dictate. It is a realistic and indispensable framework of world management, within which all national statesmen must view their responsibilities today. From now on, they must adapt and adjust their national ethos and institutions to those principles and purposes of the Charter that have been accepted by "We, the Peoples" as a working basis of their common life.

...The traditional sovereign state is no longer a viable guarantee of a nation's security or economic prosperity, nor even a guarantee of national survival. ... I

¹⁷ In 1994 *apartheid* effectively ended when African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela became president of South Africa following the nation's first free elections.

am not decrying that form of nationalism that prompts the individual citizen to appreciate and praise the achievements and values that his native land has contributed to the well-being and happiness of the whole human race. Nor am I calling for international homogenization, for I rejoice in a cultural and national uniqueness. But I am making a plea—a plea based on these ten years of looking at the human condition from my unique vantage point—for a dual allegiance. ...The realities of the present-day world call for a new quality of planetary imagination... as the price of human survival. ...They call for a *global* mentality that takes account of the nature of interdependence and the imperative need to change. ...I believe that the mark of the truly educated and imaginative person facing the twenty-first century is that he feels himself to be a planetary citizen. ...I offer that concept as part of my own contribution to building the future World Community.

After the Award

In 1974, two years after receiving the Award and many other honors around the world, U Thant died in Burma. He expressed only one regret: that he would never be able to complete the account he had begun of his life and of the many people with whom he had developed friendships in his efforts for world peace.

Chapter Eleven

1973-74: The Award that Never Was—Daniel Berrigan

One of the thickest files in the Gandhi Peace Award archive concerns an Award that was never given, and a story that made TIME magazine.

The recipient for 1973-74 was to be one of the most prophetic anti-war activists of the 1960s: Father Daniel Berrigan, the Jesuit priest whose strident eloquence and stunning actions protesting the Vietnam War had inspired much of the religious community to strengthen their own opposition. In May of 1968 he, his brother Philip, and seven other Roman Catholic priests had broken into the Selective Service office in Catonsville, Maryland, and destroyed hundreds of 1-A draft classification records; afterward they waited in the office to be arrested. They were sentenced to terms of two to over three years in Federal prison. Although Daniel avoided apprehension until 1970, the Berrigan brothers wound up together in the prison in Danbury, and while there in 1971 they were offered the Gandhi Peace Award. They turned it down on the grounds that they would accept no honors until the mission of ending the War was accomplished.

Daniel Berrigan, released in January 1972 after 27 months in prison, resumed his protest activities and the following year took a teaching position in Canada. (His brother Philip served 39 months and was released eleven months later.) Although the cataclysmic end of the War was still more than two years away, the outcome was clear to nearly everyone. The following summer, after the crushing defeat of McGovern and his peace forces by President Nixon—supported by most of the country's establishment, including the corporations and some national labor unions and religious organizations—Father Berrigan's name was again proposed for the Award, along with eleven others.

At some point during the 1960s, the Rev. Roy Pfaff, Jerome Davis's successor as Executive Director, had formalized the selection process. In the first pass, any member of P.E.P. Board could nominate a candidate. In the second pass, each member would be invited to vote on the most deserving five from the list of ten to fifteen names that resulted. The member's favorite choice would receive five points, the next choice four

points, and so on, enabling Rev. Pfaff to calculate a score for each candidate and narrow the list down to five favored names. The third pass provided an opportunity to vote the same way for those five; frequently the resulting scores were within a point or two of each other. However close the count, the top scorer was then contacted to see if he or she would be willing to attend the Award presentation to accept the Award; attendance was a requirement. (Rev. Pfaff's successor, Howard Frazier, simplified the process to two passes: the solicitation of nominations, and the actual voting.)

Candidates tended to be either internationally-known figures such as Benjamin Spock and U Thant, or people such as Willard Uphaus and George Willoughby, whose names were familiar to Board members because they, like the majority of the Board, were New York- and Connecticut-based clergymen and peace activists.

Daniel Berrigan was an internationally known peace activist and clergyman, but he was not the only one on that year's list of nominees. Philip Berrigan was on the list as well, inexplicably listed separately from his brother this time, which effectively made it impossible for the two to win jointly again. Daniel Ellsberg, David Dellinger, and Senator George McGovern were the other famous nominees that year, all predominant figures from the movement to end the War in Vietnam. That movement for about seven years had been practically synonymous with the American peace movement, as the enormity of the War overshadowed all other concerns. As P.E.P. was about to learn, the unity of that movement was about to fracture as the War's end approached.

The voting was close, as it often was. Daniel Berrigan and Daniel Ellsberg came within a single point of each other. In fact, though the winner with 97 points was Father Berrigan, Rev. Pfaff wrote Dr. Davis on July 25, 1973 that, with 27 ballots having been received, Daniel *Ellsberg* was the winner with 97 points to Father Berrigan's 96, and thus Dr. Davis should convey the good word to Dr. Ellsberg and arrange the date for the presentation; "If he does not accept we could offer it to Daniel Berrigan..." Dr. Davis wrote Dr. Ellsberg, who never replied, so the Award was designated for Father Berrigan. (Dr. Ellsberg was the recipient two years later.) Father Berrigan was reached in Canada and accepted; a note to Rev. Pfaff dated October 10th in his beautifully fluid hand requests that the date be set for January 9, 1974.

A foreshadowing of the coming controversy appears on the stationery on which that note was written, on which was Xeroxed a calligraphed saying by ancient Chinese philosopher Chuang Tsu (as translated by Thomas Merton):

You cannot put a big load in a small bag. Nor can you, with a short rope, draw water from a deep well. You cannot talk to a power politician as if he were a wise man. If he seeks to understand you, if he looks inside himself to find the truth you have told him, he cannot find it there. Not finding, he doubts. When a man doubts, he will kill.

As he wrote the note, he was already preparing a speech to be delivered about a week later, in which this sage advice would be proven true once again.

Rev. Pfaff replied to Father Berrigan at the Department of Religion of the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, confirming the date and adding, “I understand we can correspond with you at your present address until about December 10th. We will appreciate knowing how we may reach you should occasion arise for corresponding with you between Dec. 10th and January 9th.” He wrote again about a month later, again requesting an update regarding contact information and also asking for information for publicity purposes (“your teaching assignments, the places you received your degrees, your other activities and concerns as they have been expressed through your activities and your writings—both books and articles”). Father Berrigan failed to reply to either of Rev. Pfaff’s letters, with unfortunate consequences.

The Award was to be presented at the customary place, the Community Church of New York at 40 East 35th Street. A musical solo and the usual buffet dinner were also planned, beginning at 6 p.m., with the program from 7:30 to 9 p.m. The ticket cost was raised by fifty cents to three dollars, including the dinner. (Tickets for only the program remained one dollar.)

The plan was for the medal to be presented by Dorothy Day, founder of the Catholic Worker movement, who was to return from a visit to England by late December. The presenter of the certificate would be the Rev. Donald Harrington, then the Community Church’s minister and New York state chairman of the Liberal Party, who wrote that Father Berrigan’s “life was a testament to peace” and that “his opposition to the Vietnam War and the Militarization of America was consistently courageous.” (The alternate presenter was the Rev. Richard Newhaus, a leader of Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam, who had made the presentation to Rev. Coffin in

1967.) Publicity went out to *Fellowship*, *The Catholic Worker*, and numerous other publications likely to reach religious peace activists in the greater New York area. Reservations began to pour in as news about the Award spread; by Rev. Pfaff's count, 115 had been received in the mail by December 18th.

But by December news of another Berrigan event was spreading. That October he had addressed a meeting at the Association of Arab University Graduates in Washington, D.C. There, with his customary directness, he had excoriated the Arab powers for "their capacity for deception, remarkable even for our world" and for "their contempt for their own poor." These comments passed without making the slightest ripple on the public consciousness. But when he turned that same prophetic gaze on Israel, the effect was explosive.

Well known as a close companion in anti-war work of the late Rabbi Abraham J. Heschel, whom TIME called "American Judaism's most poetic Zionist", Father Berrigan in his speech expressed an identification with the historic plight of Jews. As "a priest in resistance against Rome" and as "a priest in resistance against Nixon," he felt "very like a Jew" and expressed reverence for the "historic adventure" of Israel, "which gave her the right to 'judge the nations'". Then, making a the distinction between Judaism and the political Zionism that had brought about the imposition of the state of Israel on the land of Palestine, Father Berrigan counterposed these words with an attack against that state as "a settler state" seeking "Biblical justification for crimes against humanity." He said the Jews, recovering from the Holocaust, "arose like warriors, armed to the teeth. ... Israel entered the imperial adventure. She took up the imperial weapons, she spread abroad the imperial deceptions." In the past 25 years "the slave became the master, and created slaves" in "a criminal Jewish community" featuring "the creation of an elite of millionaires, generals and entrepreneurs..." the price for which "is being paid for by Israel's Oriental Jews, the poor, the excluded, prisoners" in a state "rapidly evolving into the image of her ancient adversaries."

Father Berrigan lamented the tragedy "that in a place of Jewish prophetic wisdom, Israel should launch an Orwellian nightmare of double-talk, racism, fifth-rate sociological jargon, aimed at proving its racial superiority to the people it has crushed. ... Israel has not freed the captives; it has expanded the prison system, perfected her

espionage, [and, referring to Israel's prosperous trade in weapons,] exported on the world market that expensive blood-ridden commodity, the savage triumph of the technologized West: violence and the tools of violence. ... Her absurd generals, her military junk, are paraded on national holidays before the narcotized public."

He went on to target Israel's "domestic repression, deception, cruelty and militarism" for having created "one and a half million refugees" (i.e. the displaced Palestinians). He also said that were he a "conscientious Jew in Israel I would have to live as I was living in America; that is, in resistance against the state", subject to being "hunted by the police, or in prison." Most galling to some who heard about it later, he accused "many American Jewish leaders" of ignoring "the Asian holocaust" (i.e. the death and devastation visited upon Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos) by supporting Nixon for President in 1972 as a tactic to gain economic and military aid for Israel—though he praised American Jews in general for not following their leaders in taking "the bait offered by Nixon."

Such uncompromising criticism, utterly consistent with his equally forthright censure of the United States and the other "principalities and powers" he found to be warring against the human spirit, was magnified by the media into a stick stirred in the bustling beehive of American support for Israel. His having criticized Israel before an audience of Arabs, and his *chutzpah* in claiming a likeness to the Jew in his stand with God against the world, pushed him beyond the zone of redemption for many such supporters. Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg, president of the American Jewish Congress and a long-standing opponent of the Vietnam War, counter-attacked: "Underneath the language of the New Left, Daniel Berrigan has no patience with the Jewish community... He wishes it would go away and leave to him the role of the true Jew. Let us call all this by its right name: old-fashioned theological anti-Semitism." Hearing of the plans to bestow the Award on Father Berrigan, Rabbi Hertzberg called on P.E.P. to rescind the decision, and he pressured Rev. Harrington to withdraw his church's hospitality.

Rev. Harrington wrote Roy Pfaff on December 4th saying, "...It does appear to me that Father Berrigan has gone overboard... I have so much respect for Father Berrigan that I can't help but believe that some of these quotes must have been pulled out of

context... I suspect that you may get some kick-backs [i.e. negative reactions] from this if very many in our community here in New York have seen it. Quite a few of our Community Church people were utterly shocked by it." Roy's wife Aline Pfaff wrote back that she had "heard it referred to at a meeting on Amnesty last Sunday night and I was fairly sure we would be in trouble. He certainly doesn't sound like a 'peacemaker' if the reporting is true. ... I do appreciate having your letter to support my 'worrying'."

Rev. Harrington wrote again two days later saying that he had gotten to read Father Berrigan's address and found it "a good deal worse" than the initial reports he had received.

Had I read the article before receiving your letter asking me to present the Gandhi Peace Award to Dan Berrigan in January, I would have replied immediately that I could not do so because I would have a grave question as to whether he should receive it. I am not one of those who thinks that Israel can do no wrong, or that American Jews always come down on the right side of important questions. However, the vast majority of the Jewish community has been with us in the great liberal crusades of the past twenty years, for Civil Rights, for Racial Equality, and against the War in Vietnam, including the leaders, and it is defamation and no service to the cause of peace for it to be stated otherwise. Now, feeling as I do, so strongly about this, how can I present the Gandhi Peace Award to Father Berrigan? ... I really don't know what to do.

As Rev. Harrington was writing this, Rev. Pfaff's wife Aline was writing to him. She had just read an article by Father Berrigan called "Responses to Settler Regimes" based on his speech, published in *American Report*, the magazine of Clergy and Laymen Concerned¹⁸. She wrote, "Father Berrigan certainly doesn't praise Israel but as I read the article he does say that American Jewish leaders helped in the effort to bring peace in Vietnam." She then suggested that the person introducing Father Berrigan could say that members of the P.E.P. Board do not share his views on Israel, and that there be a question-and-answer period after Father Berrigan's speech. "If after study of the article and the situation your church preferred to have us take the dinner elsewhere I would think that a possibility. ... We know that feelings run high upon this subject."

¹⁸ The organization, founded by William Sloane Coffin, Jr. [GPA '67], had dropped "About Vietnam" from its name.

Rev. Harrington wrote back on the 13th that there was no need to change the location of the event, “for it is not embarrassing in that way.” He mentioned that the Metropolitan Synagogue shared their auditorium, and that he had always supported Zionism because “if the Jewish people could re-establish a national base, they would find it very much easier to be open toward other faiths and other peoples throughout the world,” and also that he had been “a great admirer of the achievements of a social kind in Israel.” He went on,

I think it might be well for you to talk with Dan Berrigan about all of this and see what will be least embarrassing to him... If I am to make the presentation... I feel I would have to say something about how negative was my reaction to this speech he made... This might put a damper on the meeting, and might be offensive to him, which is the last thing I would want to do, so perhaps it would be better if someone else did it. If that were acceptable, to say something about my negative reactions to his speech... as well as praising his position with respect to Vietnam, then I would feel that I could go ahead.

The following week a letter from Rev. Harrington’s church arrived. Signed by Joseph Stern of the Social Action Committee, it said that “some of our members were very distressed... some of Fr. Berrigan’s remarks appear to be insensitive to the legitimate aspirations of the Israeli people.” The committee urged that Father Berrigan take questions from the floor about his remarks on the Middle East, and that the original speech and rebuttals to it by Hertzberg and another rabbi be available at the event.

As the brouhaha continued to grow, Rev. Harrington felt the heat building. According to Rev. Pfaff, “Dr. Harrington said he had had hundreds of telephone calls and letters on the matter...” Rev. Harrington responded with a statement to the press on December 21 in which his own rhetoric was considerably hotter, withdrawing totally from his agreement to present the Award because “I believe [he] has ceased to be a witness and an influence for peace and has become the opposite. His speech... was not a prophetic utterance, only an inflammatory one.” He went on to accuse Father Berrigan of prescribing “a final crucifixion” for the people of Israel “in a speech to that nation’s sworn and bitter enemies. ... The greatness of Israel is the resurrection of a people out of the ashes of holocaust, not a hating, oppressing people, but a people pleading for peace and a chance to live as helpful neighbors. ... He felt it compelled to

describe the Israeli and American Jewish leaders in sweeping, diabolical terms... This is an additional incitement to war.”

Meanwhile, cancellations were trickling in, with expressions of dismay about Father Berrigan's "anti-Semitic remarks"; that, one P.E.P. supporter wrote, "horrified even me, a non-Zionist but a Jew." A sampling of other comments among the eighteen cancellations: "I very much regret that your very worthwhile organization is caught in the middle, but I cannot be part of these proceedings" and "[Berrigan] has done a grave injury to a valiant little country who has made the desert bloom" and "[His] latest blasts have completely turned me off" and "No objective considerations of the Middle East can ignore, as Berrigan ignores, the Arab avowal to exterminate Israel." A man who had participated in several P.E.P. travel tours and assumed the Award had been made subsequent to the October speech scolded, "Keep the same initials, P.E.P., but change the name of your organization... to Promoting Enduring Prejudice." Many of those canceling were Jewish, not surprising since a review of the registration lists for Award ceremonies indicates very strong participation by Jewish members of the New York area peace community.

Rev. Pfaff wrote to each one individually, returning ticket fees as requested. In one reply he wrote, "Many of the board members who had been in favor of making the Award to Father Berrigan earlier now feel that his remarks to the Association [of Arab Graduate Students] were of such nature that they cannot favor presenting the Award to him. We are in the process of re-polling all board members since all board members were participating in the polling for the Award recipient last summer."

Board members had indeed written in on both sides of the issue. The most fervently anti-Berrigan reaction came from the Rev. Karl Baehr, a long-time Board member who also held positions on the boards of several Jewish organizations. He called Father Berrigan's comments "Scurrilously false—a maligning of the Jewish people. Moreover, the violence of his language is of the type which helps to make genocide possible. ... His false and violent attack upon Israel and Israel supporters is obviously promoting not enduring peace but enduring hatred and prejudice. ... If [the Award is not withdrawn], Promoting Enduring Peace is contributing to hatred, violence, and war. And, in that event, please accept this note as my resignation. (Copy to Dr. Har-

rington)” Other comments from Board members included: “Giving it to him would be a BLACK Mark on our organization and I would have to consider resignation.” “He ignores the provocative actions and attitudes of the Arabs.” “Maybe later, when the present storm has subsided, but not now.”

The Rev. Arthur Rinden, a P.E.P. Board member, head of the Hartford United Nations Association, and former chair of the Social Sciences division of Piedmont College in Georgia, agreed: “The general position Berrigan takes is the most equitable. However... if the meeting is held as scheduled, it will lead to a lot of controversy, and there will be little gain, but a lot of loss. ...I would cancel the meeting.”

There were also letters on the other side, expressing sentiments such as “I do hope the Gandhi Peace Award will still be given to Dan Berrigan” and “Berrigan’s talk is even-handed. People are not accustomed to hearing truth to power concerning Israel... In my opinion there is an attempt to finish off the peace movement... and this Berrigan affair just may do it.”

Jerome Davis, too, was on the side of going ahead with the Award. “It is not right once we have offered the award to Daniel Berrigan and he has accepted it not to give it to him,” he wrote. Displaying his customary directiveness, he added:

Won’t you call up the members of the Board and get an affirmative vote. Have Roland Bainton make the presentation ... In the scroll given to him just state we are giving it to him because of his stand on the Vietnam War. In regard to getting a crowd all you have to do is call up all the peace organizations in New York and ask them to get their members to come... and ask many of the churches to make an announcement about it. ...Please write me immediately that it is being held.

In a letter two days later he wrote, “No matter how few we have at the dinner let us go forward with it. ... In my whole life I do not know of a case where after agreeing to give an award it has been canceled.”

Dr. Davis also solicited the opinion of Professor Alfred Jacob, who wrote:

This is a balanced speech by a deeply committed Christian and pacifist who deplores violence and imperialistic domination wherever he finds it—in America, in his own Church, in Arab states, in the Jewish state. ... If a peace prize is to be given, let it go to a man like this who sees the problem wherever it is, and is not responsive to pressures nor to temporal considerations. ... The peace movement

needs men who can stand up and be counted as adherents of the way of Jesus; not men who will retract a sane statement at the first sign of storm. Berrigan should be interpreted not as condemning Israel (or the U.S.A. or Egypt or the Catholic Church) but as condemning militarism and imperialism.

The Rev. George Hill, Board member and minister of the East Avenue Methodist Church in Norwalk, was equally strong in favor:

I believe it is essential that we persist in giving Dan Berrigan the Award. One of the root causes for prolongation of the Vietnam War was the silence of people who knew the war was wrong but who wanted to retain the good will of powerful friends. We need people who speak out regardless of consequences. P.E.P. should not turn against one who does so; that's what we're giving him the Award for. ... Anti-Zionism is *not* the same thing as anti-Semitism—and those who intentionally confuse the issue are adding to the tragic burden of falsehood that creates wars in the world. I have carefully read Berrigan's speech. ... He speaks as one who treasures the Jewish prophetic tradition, appreciates its real and potential contributions in correcting the war-making tendencies of governments, and cries in outrage when he sees that tradition forgotten in idol-worship of the Zionist state. ... In the present climate in our country P.E.P. can provide a real service by encouraging discussion of Berrigan's statements about Israel to see if they are *true*. But that is a separate issue from whether or not he ought to receive the Award. We made that decision once; let's stick by it.

The poll was worded by Rev. Pfaff in a way that today might be considered less than scientific. Rather than simply asking for assent to either "I favor" or "I do not favor" presenting the Award to Father Berrigan, each statement went on to supply a reason, with a stronger motive for canceling. The reason for going ahead was, "I do not believe his remarks... constitute a basis for canceling our plans to give him the Award." The reason for canceling was, "His position on the Arab-Israeli conflict does not appear to me to be that of a peacemaker."

Nonetheless, many Board members added their own reasons. Scott Nearing, the revered author, philosopher and naturalist, wrote, "His speech... was an excellent 'peace' speech." On the other hand, Board member Rev. Walter Ulrich wrote, "While I still favor presenting the Award... I cannot approve the one-sided contents of his speech." Thomas Emerson, a distinguished Yale law professor on the Board, wrote, "We should not cancel the Award. ... I read his speech as being wildly anti-imperialist

(really anti-State) and not anti-Semitic. His extreme views are nothing new.” Board member Rev. Wallace Viets added, “His statement is an excellent analysis of the situation ...and his sentiments are in accord with the finest of Jewish thought which the Israeli state has repudiated.” And Joseph Fletcher wrote, “Berrigan’s address is hysterical—expressed in a fascinating rhetoric. My hunch is that he would do an equally rough job on the Arabs but *feels freer to accuse the Jews because he identifies so much more with them.*” [His emphasis.] Dr. Jack McMichael asked, “Let us not penalize free speech or dissent. ...If Donald Harrington or some other one would debate the Berrigan position, let that be done and both sides be heard.” Dr. Harold Bosley added simply, “We ought to proceed according to plan. To do otherwise would dishonor our group.”

While the poll was being taken, the story was generating more press coverage than the Gandhi Peace Award had ever received—probably more than in all other years put together. Articles and letters to the editor appeared in the NEW YORK TIMES and Post and Daily News, most Connecticut dailies, several national magazines including TIME and COMMONWEAL, and various other papers and journals around the country. One letter in the TIMES rated “Berrigan’s truth quotient at about 20 per cent.” Another recalled that Gandhi himself had condemned the Zionists of Israel in terms at least as vehement as Berrigan’s: “They are co-sharers with the British in despoiling a people who have done no wrong to them... It is wrong to impose the Jews on the Arabs. What is going on in Palestine today cannot be justified by any moral code of conduct.” And TIME used the account in its last issue of the 1972 year as a stepping-off place for comparing the supposedly lukewarm support of Israel by liberal Protestant authorities to the unrestrained support by Catholic and evangelical church organizations.

By Christmas the forty-six members of the P.E.P.’s Board had been polled and twenty-three had responded. Roland Bainton, P.E.P.’s president, voted to withdraw the Award, and was joined in that sentiment by the Revs. Lee Ball, Sidney Lovett, Rinden, and Baehr; Drs. D.F. Fleming and Kirtley Mather; Rabbi Robert Goldberg, Kivie Kaplan, Ruth Gage Colby, and Bess Horowitz Starfield. Voting with Jerome Davis to go ahead with the Award were Drs. Bosley, McMichael, and Nearing; Pro-

fessors Emerson, Fletcher, and John C. Kennedy; Revs. Hill, Ulrich and Viets; Mildred Scott Olmsted, and Louis Zemel. Because Rev. Pfaff unaccountably failed to count Dr. Bosley's vote, he calculated the result as a tie.

It hardly mattered. On December 28th, before the outcome of the poll could be announced (or even concluded), a letter arrived from Father Berrigan by air mail special delivery. It was addressed to Rev. Pfaff, undated, with a New York City apartment as the return address. "I note that you are presently engaged in a poll of your directors, to reevaluate the conferring of the Gandhi Award," he began. By then the possibility that the Award would be withdrawn had been reported widely in the press. "I am thus invited, I take it (you have not investigated my feelings) to be a bystander at a degrading consensus game, your organization having yielded to the pressures of recent weeks. I must report, however, that my conscience is not subject to your constituency. I hereby resign from your prize."

Father Berrigan's letter went on to call the poll "a tacit admission that certain subjects lie outside the ambit of reasoned criticism" and accused P.E.P. of "deifying the subject." "Has Israel become your idol?" he asked of those who condemned his criticisms. He said it was not clear that "the best interests of Israel are served by those who would outlaw criticism of her policies." He suggested that Rev. Harrington, Rabbi Hertzberg, and Michael Novak (a conservative Catholic attached to the Rockefeller Foundation, who had written a critical response in *Commonweal* magazine) were acting as "a troika of bigots in common cause." He recalled that in the 'sixties he had been "hounded from the American scene by Catholics" for departing from "the bellicose dogmas of Cardinal Spellman", who had done his best to imply the Church's blessing to U.S. objectives in Vietnam; "it has perhaps become clearer in the intervening years who was at that time speaking for the honor of the church. ...Now it is on three fronts, Catholic, Protestant and Jewish, that the armies of orthodoxy appear."

In the letter Father Berrigan responded to Harrington's objection that he attacked Israel before an Arab audience:

Now I had thought that a Christian could neither appear before Arabs as Israel's enemies, nor before Jews as enemies of Arabs. I had thought that we Christians were required to go before any people (and especially before warring people) to announce a new reality: that of friend and brother... required to announce that

reality before it existed, and thus to help bring it into being. I have seen nothing in our scripture which allowed us to take sides, to approve of war, to add our blessing to the bloodletting of history. Moreover, I had seen nothing in the recent history of Israel, which persuaded me that a continuation of this war, or its cold and hot cycles, or its alliances, or its Nixonian weaponry, would accomplish anything for anyone, including Israel—except, inevitably, to multiply the dead.

The letter continued, “I had pursued a critique and urged in consequence, a search for alternatives. Of this I am beyond doubt guilty.

Meantime, the hour is late. We bicker and fret; and children starve, men and women suffer, are homeless, are maimed and murdered. And how shall we inherit the blessing, if our eyes are blinded, our spirits distempered, and we become but another element in a world of unmitigated savagery?

Father Berrigan concluded,

Offering me the chance to refuse the Gandhi prize brings me somewhat nearer the spirit of Gandhi; it is not a time for reward, but a time for labor. I will continue to work, with Protestants and Catholics and Jews, for a time when murder is not the definitive solution to human differences.

In distributing copies of the letter to Board members and others, Rev. Pfaff noted at the top that the same day he received it, an article quoting from it appeared in the *NEW YORK TIMES*; and that Father Berrigan had sent him not the original letter but a photocopy of it.

Rev. Pfaff wrote back the same day, noting that he had tried to reach Father Berrigan by telephone but was told that he did not take phone calls. He reminded the priest that “we asked weeks ago for your address after you were to leave Canada. This is our first communication from you. This should explain to you why we have ‘not investigated’ your ‘feelings’ before taking the poll... we were dependent upon your informing us of your whereabouts.” Rev. Pfaff went on to list many of the past recipients of the Award and to detail the selection process, noting that Father Berrigan was “the only person to be invited twice” to receive the Award.

He then gave an exact accounting of how the ticket sales had suddenly fallen off after reports of “the speech” had appeared, noting that “we had every reason to believe attendance this year was going to run between 300 and 500,” but now it would be only

around a hundred. Detailing the process by which Board members had learned of “the speech,” he wrote,

...there was no way to avoid a poll for determining whether or not you had made statements in your address which appeared to our board members to negate your role of peacemaker in the Middle East conflict... [It was] the only method open to a democratically operated organization and not a ‘degrading consensus game’... Few of the recent recipients of the Award would have been selected had our board asked the general public, let alone ‘the armies of orthodoxy,’ to dictate what we should do.

Rev. Pfaff went on to deny that the poll was being taken because Israel’s policies are deemed above criticism, or that Rev. Harrington approved uncritically of those policies. He then suggested that “an open dialogue on the Middle East crisis with you and certain other persons setting forth your respective agendas for a just and lasting peace between the Arab nations and Israel” be held at the same place as the Award presentation. He closed by inviting Father Berrigan to call him collect to discuss the idea.

The following day Dr. Bainton wrote Father Berrigan:

I am distressed over the matter... [as] president of Promoting Enduring Peace. Just a short time ago I was given a new item of information, namely that you did not address a gathering of Arab graduate students but a conference in which Jews and Arabs were equally represented. That changes the picture and we may well owe you an apology for having been misled by the press.

Dr. Bainton continued with a letter he had written earlier to send to Father Berrigan, claiming, “We had no intention of disclosing anything to the press prior to our decision. You have taken the proper course in declining to accept the Award if it were still offered.”

Dr. Bainton then advised,

As to my feeling I voted to withdraw the invitation... Grave wrongs have been committed by all of us against the Jews and now by the Jews against the Arabs. There is a role for a *vox clamans in deserto*¹⁹ but that voice should beware of rendering more difficult the task of those who are striving to stay carnage by the least unsatisfactory and most feasible compromise.

¹⁹ “a voice crying in the wilderness”—Isaiah 40:3, Matthew 3:3.

He concluded, “[Along] with you I have no enthusiasm for peace awards. ... Giving [the Nobel Peace Prize] to Kissinger is an utter travesty.”

The first week of 1974, Rev. Pfaff distributed an expanded and improved version of his December 28th letter to Father Berrigan. Dated January 2, 1974, it went into greater detail about the difficulties of contacting him and the efforts made to do so. It appears that this revised version was never sent to Father Berrigan, but was distributed as the public position of P.E.P. on the matter. The following day he began mailing out a letter of explanation, with refunds, to those who had sent in money for tickets. He informed them of the possibility of “a dialogue on the Middle East sometime in the next few months... Father Berrigan... would be invited to be one of the speakers. ... We will be glad to send you an announcement if such a development should materialize.” (It did not.)

The day after that, Dr. Bainton sent a short letter to the Board members briefly recounting his version of the events leading up to Father Berrigan’s resignation from the Award. “The result of the poll was that half of the members thought the invitation to receive the Award should be withdrawn, because our commendation of his stand on Vietnam was severely compromised by a strategy in the present crisis more likely to enflame than appease conflict. The other half felt that, however this might be, his contribution to peace in the earlier instance merited recognition. Father Berrigan, hearing that we had the matter under consideration, wrote to say that he would not accept the Award.”

Two days before the date of the now-canceled event, Rev. Pfaff replied to someone requesting copies of Father Berrigan’s speech and the rebuttals by Rabbi Hertzberg and Michael Novak. He noted that Father Berrigan had now declined the Award twice; and that the vote by the Board had been a tie, but that “with the emotion generated” he “would have been hesitant to go to Community Church Jan. 9th at any rate. We are now 66 years of age and about to retire and I want a few years to rest from the hard work that P.E.P. has been for almost ten years!” The other key item of business at the Award event was to have been the confirmation of Rev. Pfaff’s successor, Howard Frazier.

Rev. Pfaff commented wryly in another note, "I am sure there was much more publicity than there would have been had he not declined it. A rejection of an award is much more newsworthy than an acceptance."

Chapter Twelve

1974-75: From the Strange to the Sublime—Dorothy Day

The trauma following the Berrigan resignation was simultaneous with the passage from the decade of Roy and Aline Pfaff to the era of Howard and Alice Frazier. The transitional nature of the year was somewhat reflected in the strange list of nominees for the 1975 Award.

Leading off the list that summer of 1974 was, *mirabile dictu*, Daniel Berrigan. Next was Daniel Ellsberg. P.E.P. supporter Lee Ball and P.E.P. Treasurer Tom Emerson were listed, along with a number of other worthy peace activists: Richard Deats, Alfred Hassler, Russell Johnson of the American Friends Service Committee, John Nevin Sayre and Welthy Honsinger Fisher. Also listed were Jane Fonda, Senator J. W. Fulbright, Dorothy Day and—*Henry Kissinger*, who, a decade before in a public debate with Norman Thomas [GPA '67], had urged expanding U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War.

The previous year Kissinger had won the Nobel Peace Prize jointly with Le Duc Tho of Vietnam—an outcome Dr. Bainton [GPA '79] had called “an utter travesty.” The fact that a P.E.P. Board member would nominate Kissinger for the Award despite his leading role in waging the Vietnam War (not to mention the Cold War and ruthless counter-insurgencies in Latin America and Asia), and that the list of Award nominees could range from Kissinger to Fonda in the same year, suggests the ideological breadth and diversity of P.E.P.’s far-flung National Advisory Board. (Dr. Bainton wrote on his ballot next to Kissinger’s name, “Are we SERIOUS???”)

By the end of June, twenty-seven ballots had been received out of forty-five sent out, and Howard Frazier, P.E.P.’s new executive director, had calculated the results: Senator Fulbright had won, with Dorothy Day a distant second. (Fonda came in third, Ellsberg fourth; Kissinger was near the bottom, but he did out-poll Berrigan.) Fulbright, the retiring senior Senator from Arkansas who had chaired the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, had been a leader of the opposition within the Senate to the Vietnam War. He was also distinguished as the founder of the Fulbright Scholarships

to support outstanding American students in overseas studies. (One young American who had returned from a term as a Fulbright Scholar just a few years before was another Arkansan named Bill Clinton.) P.E.P. Board member Ruth Gage Colby expressed the common sentiment about Senator Fulbright in a letter to Howard Frazier, “I know you felt as sorry as I did about Senator Fulbright’s defeat [in the 1974 election].²⁰ ... It would be splendid if Promoting Enduring Peace could honor Senator Fulbright for his years of constructive service to peace and understanding between the nations and the young people of the world.”

Jerome Davis immediately wrote to Senator Fulbright, who replied in a letter dated July 3, 1974 that demonstrated his command of southern-style courtliness. The Senator told Davis that his “words of approval of my efforts make the decision of the people so much easier to accept. These thirty years in the Senate have been an interesting experience, and your fine letter leads me to believe it was worthwhile.” The letter went on to say, “I am complimented indeed that the Promoting Enduring Peace organization wishes to give me the Gandhi Peace Award, and I regret so much that I am unable to set a date.” Senator Fulbright explained, “I am overwhelmed by the task of cleaning up the debris of the campaign, as well as... having to dismantle this office and sort and dispose of thirty years of files. ... If I find later that circumstances permit me to accept, I will be pleased to get in touch with you...”

That left P.E.P. at the receiving end of the “don’t call us, we’ll call you” limbo. Nonetheless, Dr. Davis replied, “We will be counting on giving the Award to you. We believe you deserve it more than anyone else in America. ... We will count definitely on giving the Award to you at some time and place that is convenient to you.”

Nothing further was heard from Senator Fulbright. Finally, on November 9th, Dr. Davis wrote to Senator Fulbright that the date of February 5, 1975 had been selected for the Award dinner in New York. “It is our hope that you will be available on that night to receive it. If not, we must proceed with an alternate selection.” Senator Fulbright wrote back promptly, “As I mentioned in my letter in July, I am complimented indeed that [P.E.P.] wishes to give me the Award, and I am terribly sorry that I am unable to attend the dinner on February 5 because Mrs. Fulbright and I expect to be

²⁰ Until that defeat one of the Senator’s aides had been a young Arkansan named Bill Clinton.

away at that time. ... I do hope you will understand what my situation has been since the election ... I am recuperating from surgery now, and an absence of more than a month from the office adds to the pressure... I appreciate more than I can say your thought of me in this connection.”

As of mid-November, with the Award dinner less than three months away, P.E.P. had no recipient. Howard Frazier and Ruth Gage Colby immediately drafted an eloquent letter to Dorothy Day: “In recognition of the great contribution you have made to the cause of peace and selfless service by your writing, your speaking, and your action, it is the desire of the Board of Directors... that you be given the Gandhi Peace Award. For several years this Award has been given to people who have made significant contributions in making this world a more peaceful place to live. ...” She accepted; Dorothy Day would be the first woman to receive the Award since Eleanor Roosevelt in 1961. The event was set for February 5th.

Dorothy Day

Dorothy Day was born in 1897. Her upbringing led her quickly to a socialist outlook: while still a teenager she began a career in journalism with *THE CALL*, the socialist newspaper of the International Workers of the World (known as the “Wobblies”). At nineteen she moved on to be an editor of *THE MASSES*, a newspaper published by the Communist Party until it was suppressed following the entry of the U.S. into World War I. That same year she was jailed for the first time for demonstrating at the White House with other feminists protesting the exclusion of women from political affairs. She was jailed again in 1922, while on the staff of the Communist magazine *THE LIBERATOR*, when the staff was victimized by an anti-red raid. She worked for newspapers in Chicago and New Orleans, sold an autobiographical novel to Hollywood, and became a single parent.

According to her biographer Jim Forest, while pregnant with her daughter she experienced a religious conversion, immersed in prayers of joy and gratitude. Seeking a vocation combining her political and religious convictions, she served on the staff of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. In 1933 she co-founded the *Catholic Worker* to promote pacifism and social justice, with the aim of uniting workers and intellectuals in joint efforts to improve farming, education, and social conditions. It sold for a penny

per copy; the price today is the same. She got support from French-American editor Peter Maurin, who had developed a program of social reconstruction he called “the Green Revolution.” By 1936, as the pressure built toward war, the publication reached a circulation of 150,000. Hers was the first pacifist movement within the Catholic Church for centuries, the first to put Jesus before “the just-war theologians at the center of the Church’s social life.”

She expanded the newspaper into a movement combining religious dedication and progressive action, based on the literal interpretation of the Gospel. She fed and clothed the hungry while educating the masses, attracting thousands of like-minded progressive idealists to her operation in New York City. She preached simplicity, renunciation, and service; as she once said, “The best thing to do with the best things in life is to give them up.” When asked how long a poor guest was “allowed” to stay at a Catholic Worker house, she replied, “We let them stay forever. . . . Once they are taken in, they become members of the family. Or rather, they always were members of the family. They are our brothers and sisters in Christ.”

Though she was often called a Communist, she never joined any political party. Her skepticism about American culture and modern values was a frequent theme: “Tradition! We scarcely know the word anymore,” she wrote in 1952, at the onset of the Cold War and the rise of American consumerism. “We are afraid to be either proud of our ancestors or ashamed of them. We scorn nobility in name and in fact. We cling to a bourgeois mediocrity which would make it appear we are all Americans, made in the image and likeness of George Washington.”

Often imprisoned for her peace, civil rights, and labor activities, she had been a prisoner just two years before, in 1973, when she was arrested with Chicanos struggling to form a union. Forest writes, “All the women jailed with her signed their names on her rough prison garment, making it a treasure to her.”

She preached “the little way” that strove for big changes by making countless small changes. Forest writes, “On the refrigerator in one Catholic Worker house, I found this text from Dorothy: *Paper work, cleaning the house, dealing with the innumerable visitors who come through all day, answering the phone, keeping patience and acting intelligently, which*

is to find some meaning in all that happens—these things, too, are the works of peace, and often seem like a very little way.”

As part of his first communication to the thousands on P.E.P.'s mailing list, Howard Frazier wrote in early December, “For many years, Dorothy Day has combined dedication to the American working class with an ardent internationalism, and in her work and style of living she has demonstrated the passions of a great reformer. ... We hope that all P.E.P. members and their friends will join us on this occasion of honoring one of America's most distinguished leaders.” He wrote in the public announcement, “Dorothy Day... has been fortunate in having unique energy, humanity and talent, which have enabled her to participate in this century's great movements for liberation and social justice. Throughout her lifetime of personal growth and changing affiliations, there has been a common theme: a commitment to the deproletarianization of humankind, to spiritual growth, to giving a vision of society where it is easier for people to be good.”

The Awards have frequently anticipated by a decade or more the widespread recognition of recipients by the general public. This was true of Dorothy Day, whose reputation in succeeding years grew to the point that, in 1986, Jim Forest could justifiably write in his Dorothy Day biography *Love is the Measure* that she “may in time have a place in human memory and affection similar to that now accorded St. Francis of Assisi. ... [Like him she has] an attraction to the poor which led her to live among them, and a commitment to live out the most radical teachings of Jesus, including the renunciation of violence. Like Francis, she started a movement that was meant for anyone... The Catholic Worker movement she began in 1933 has led to the foundation of houses of hospitality in many parts of the United States. The newspaper she edited until her death [in 1980 at age 83] has become the most widely circulated pacifist magazine in the world, with one hundred thousand subscribers.”

The 1975 Award Ceremony

The inscription on the Award certificate was written by Martin Cherniack, P.E.P.'s new associate director:

*Promoting Enduring Peace is honoring
Dorothy Day
with the 1975 Gandhi Peace Award
Because she has devoted a lifetime of struggle to producing
a society where humanity and goodness can develop, and
Because she has been a living synthesis of the religious
community's message of spiritual growth, egalitarianism,
and good works and the activist community's message of
social justice and defense of the oppressed.*

Ruth Gage Colby, a P.E.P. Board member and also the U.N. representative for the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, was designated to present the Award. Dr. Felix Lion, associate minister of the Community Church of New York, gave the welcome. Among others, Paul Moore, Episcopal Bishop of New York wrote in for tickets, stating, "I will be present at the supper honoring Dorothy Day who was one of my heroines." He was invited, along with Dr. Bainton and Jerome Davis, to contribute some remarks to the presentation. Beth Horowitz Starfield coordinated the event, which was identical in format to previous Award dinners. The ticket price was dropped back to \$2.50 including dinner. The Gandhi Peace Awards were back on track.

Chapter Thirteen

1975-76: Widening the Net—Daniel Ellsberg

In June of 1975, P.E.P.'s new executive director, Howard Frazier, invited for the first time not only Board members but also other peace organizations to submit nominations for the 1976 Award. He also innovated by asking that nominators give their reasons, so that the information could be summarized and included with the ballots. This meant that nominees previously unknown to Board members could be seriously considered.

Two nominees were especially unique. First, Dr. Ernest Jaski of Southwest College sent an unsolicited nomination of Dr. John Eddy, complete with a thick packet of supporting documentation. Dr. Eddy was serving as a professor of guidance and counseling at Loyola University (which like Southwest College is in Chicago). He had met Howard at the International Peace Congress held at Notre Dame University in 1974. Dr. Eddy had given a speech and chaired the sessions at that conference, an activity of the World Peace Academy. He had a long list of credits for peace activities and publications, none of which appeared to overlap with those familiar to New York area peace activists. His name was duly added to the ballot, with a summary of the material sent with his nomination.

The second unique nominee was Bruce Baechler, nominated by Bill Samuel, a Quaker belonging to the White House Daily Meeting in Washington, D.C. Though most Award recipients had been “grey heads,” Baechler at just 20 years of age was the youngest nominee ever. He was a Quaker pacifist and a draft resister who was dragged from a prayer service at the Friends Meeting in Washington, D.C. in 1974 by F.B.I. agents. Despite his obvious entitlement to conscientious objector status, he was sentenced to two years in prison by a Federal judge in Greensboro, and the Supreme Court refused to hear his appeal; as such he became the first “post-Vietnam era” draft resister sentenced to prison. His original conviction was for praying in the White House in July of 1973. He began serving his sentence in July 1975, as the Award bal-

loting was proceeding. His case was publicized widely in a fund-raising letter put out by the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors, headquartered in Philadelphia.

The other nominees were better known to Board members: Daniel Ellsberg again; Willard Uphaus and William Sloane Coffin, Jr., both of whom had received the Award before; the famous radical journalist I.F. Stone; Dave Dellinger, leader of non-violent street actions since before World War II; Richard Barnet, founder of the anti-militarist Institute for Policy Studies; and Kay Camp, head of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), who received the Award nine years later. Jerome Davis also nominated Norman Cousins, editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW; David McReynolds, head of the War Resisters League; and Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Levering, chairs of the Friends Committee on National Legislation, owners of a commercial fruit orchard, and environmental activists focusing on the law of the seas.

Daniel Ellsberg

The winner was Daniel Ellsberg, who had been chosen in 1973 but had not responded to the invitation. (Second was I.F. Stone, third was Richard Barnet.)

This time Dr. Ellsberg did respond favorably. Howard Frazier wrote him in April, inviting him to come to New York to accept the Award. It so happened that Dr. Ellsberg had already begun participating in a national peace event called the Continental Walk for Disarmament and Social Justice, which started in San Francisco in February and would reach Washington, D.C. on October 16th. That meant that Dr. Ellsberg would only need to travel from Washington to New York to attend the event. Howard then confirmed the arrangements by telephoning his home in San Francisco in September. They agreed on October 21, 1976, at the Community Church of New York; the date was moved a week to the 28th because of a scheduling conflict.

Dr. Ellsberg was, at age 39, a principal author of *History of U.S. Decision-Making in Vietnam, 1945-1968*, later known as the Pentagon Papers. The highly classified three-thousand-page study was written at the order of former Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara to examine the United States' involvement in Southeast Asia. Completed in January 1969, the study revealed repeated miscalculations, bureaucratic arrogance, official stupidity, and an insistence on imposing desirable scenarios over reality. It also disclosed a widespread system of deception and self-deception on every level, from

field commanders to the White House, that conspired to conceal the extent of U.S. military involvement, the true brutality of U.S. tactics, and the pervasive and continuing lack of success in winning Vietnamese hearts, minds, and territory to the objective of “pacifying” Vietnam under a U.S.-controlled anticommunist regime.

Dr. Ellsberg found that he could no longer continue as a loyal Pentagon employee participating in that conspiracy. Working secretly night after night into the wee hours, he photocopied thousands of pages of the study and smuggled them out of the Pentagon in his satchel. In 1971 he gave copies of the report, except for volumes bearing on negotiations, to the NEW YORK TIMES, the WASHINGTON POST, and to other papers throughout the country. On June 13, 1971, five years prior to P.E.P.’s selection of Dr. Ellsberg to receive the Award, the NEW YORK TIMES began a series of articles based on the study. Attorney General Mitchell asked the TIMES to cease further publication on grounds that the information would cause “irreparable injury to the defense interests of the United States”; the TIMES rejected that view. The Justice Department then secured an injunction from a Federal appeals court to stop the WASHINGTON POST from publishing what the TIMES had already begun to publish, pending a hearing. On June 30th the Supreme Court ruled that the First Amendment to the Constitution overrode such considerations and permitted publication to resume.

But the Nixon Administration wasn’t finished with Dr. Ellsberg. Later that year, as Howard’s press release reported, “he was indicted by Attorney General [John] Mitchell on the charge of violation of the espionage, theft, and conspiracy statutes, with a maximum possible sentence of 115 years.” He admitted giving copies of the study to the press and surrendered to Federal authorities in Boston. A Federal grand jury in Los Angeles indicted him and his “co-conspirator” Anthony Russo on charges of stealing the secret 47-volume study.

“On May 11, 1973,” the release continued, “after two years of trial procedures and five months in open court, all charges against him were dismissed on grounds of a pattern of numerous violations of law of the rights of the defendants committed by the executive branch of the U.S. government. A number of these crimes were later traced directly to President Nixon, forming an important part of the case for impeachment that led to his resignation in 1974, and leading to the conviction and sentencing of several of

his major aides, including John Ehrlichman, Charles Colson, and Egil Krogh.” Incredibly, Ehrlichman and three of the “White House plumbers” involved in the Watergate conspiracy were found guilty in July 12 of 1974 of conspiring to violate the civil rights of Dr. Lewis Fielding, Dr. Ellsberg’s psychiatrist, by breaking into his office in Beverly Hills in an attempt to find records that would show Dr. Ellsberg was mentally deranged.

“Since the ending of the trial, Ellsberg has testified before Congress on the risks to democracy of the secrecy system, cooperated with the Watergate, Impeachment, and C.I.A. investigations and the Special Prosecutor’s Office, and in the fall of 1974 delivered a series of lectures for the Indochina Peace Campaign. Both before and since the final ending of the War, he has lectured widely on campuses, largely in support of activities oriented to peace and democracy, in particular the Continental Walk...”

The 1976 Award Ceremony

Following the pattern set by his predecessor, Howard set about inviting the members of New York area peace groups such as Fellowship of Reconciliation. He also recruited Julia and Leon Winston of Yonkers to design and execute cut-paper art works to serve as the Award certificates. The price for the event, including dinner, returned to three dollars.

A regrettable milestone of this year’s presentation was Jerome Davis’s first absence from the Award Ceremony. He wrote from the nursing home in Maryland to which he had moved, “Awful sorry but I have no car here and it is difficult to get the train. My doctor does not want me to go. I have written a brief message which you can read to the group...” Read by Howard Frazier during the presentation, and distributed in written form at the event, it was a simple and poignant statement that touched on the P.E.P. founder’s background and life of Christian service. Part of it evoked his own portentous meeting with Mohandas Gandhi himself:

After returning to the United States, I taught at the Yale Divinity School. Every summer I would conduct seminars abroad. On one such trip I went to India and went down alone to see Gandhi. He invited me to stay overnight and sleep on the floor.

Gandhi told me that militarism and war were the worst evils in the world. He said that the United States was one of the countries [involved in those evils] as witnessed in the Vietnam War and in our stationing troops all over Europe.

He said he believed nuclear weapons could destroy all mankind. He urged that we spend our money in helping backward countries. He said we must build friendship with all countries and not hate.

Board member Lou Zemel presided over the Award presentation. Welcoming remarks were delivered by the Rev. Alan Egly, associate minister of the Community Church. A highlight of the program was a selection of slides from the Continental Walk presented by Joanne Sheehan, a Continental Walk staffer. Howard Frazier then read Dr. Davis's statement.

Dr. Bainton made the Award presentation as president of P.E.P. Dr. Ellsberg accepted the Award; an edited version of his acceptance speech was published *Fellowship*, the journal of the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

The inscription on the Award was:

*Presented to Daniel Ellsberg
with admiration for his exposure, at great personal risk, of
the duplicity of the makers of our public policy. This disclosure hastened not only the end of an unjust war abroad,
but also the exposure of corruption at home. Even more significant was the clarification of the conflict between confidentiality and the right of the public to know.*

Ellsberg spoke about the Continental Walk as a metaphor for sustained political action, and about the risks he had taken to get the truth about the Vietnam War to the American people, and the need for all progressives to keep taking risks. His remarks were transcribed and edited by Jim Forest and subsequently published in the Fellowship of Reconciliation journal.

After the Award

On November 12th Howard received a hand-written note from Dr. Ellsberg:

That was a very warm, gratifying evening with you and your friends. I don't think that I expressed adequately, on the spot, how impressed and moved I was by the drafting of the citation, and by the care that went into its production, along with the beautiful medal. Will you please convey to all those involved my admiration and gratitude? I am *very* pleased to have them—and the memory of the whole occasion.

(On a separate page he wrote, “My expenses—which you reminded me to send you—amounted to the air fare... and several long taxi fares in the City. I stayed with my son in the Bowery, so no hotel bill.” The total was sixty-seven dollars.)

Chapter Fourteen

1977-78: Peace and Freedom of Belief—

Peter Benenson & Martin Ennals

In April 1977, after four months of collecting suggestions for candidates to receive the 1977 Award, Howard Frazier invited the members of the P.E.P. Board of Directors to choose five names from a list of eight. The list led off with Bella Abzug, the former New York Congressperson, activist in civil rights and feminist causes, crusader against U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War, and leader of numerous peace and disarmament causes. Next were Peter Benenson and Martin Ennals, respectively the founder and the general secretary of Amnesty International; it would be a joint award. Another nominee was Jacques Cousteau, the renowned explorer, documentor, and defender of life in the seas. Nominated once again (this time by two Board members) was David McReynolds of the War Resister's League, a key figure in the New York-based peace movement, a leader of the recently concluded Continental Walk, and, in Howard Frazier's words, "one of the purest."

Another candidate was Stewart Mott, heir to the apple sauce fortune and "a very unusual philanthropist" (as Howard wrote) who was well-known for funding progressive causes and candidates. Next on the list was Helvi Sipila, Assistant Secretary General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs for the United Nations and then the highest-ranking woman in the U.N. Secretariat. The sixth nominee was Edward F. Snyder, head of the Friends Committee on National Legislation, perhaps the most effective peace lobbying group of the day. Seventh was George Willoughby, who led the first cruise boat to cross into restricted waters as a way to halt U.S. nuclear weapons testing in the Pacific and was a prominent tax resister and a leader in War Resisters International. The last nominee was Raymond Wilson, a leader of the American Friends Service Committee and founder of the Friends Committee of which Edward Snyder was the head.

Peter Benenson and Martin Ennals

Peter Benenson and Martin Ennals of England won the vote. In mid-July Howard notified them of their selection. The negotiations about the date for the Award presentation revealed a difficulty in selecting peacemakers from places beyond the northeastern United States. Though it had a small endowment, mostly from Jerome Davis's bequests, P.E.P lacked the funds to reimburse Award recipients for anything more than minimal travel costs. Consequently the Award dinner had to be scheduled around when the recipient's other activities would bring them to or near New York. The date slipped from November to December and finally to January 19, 1978. Ennals replied to Howard's notification letter, "Both Peter Benenson and I are profoundly touched... We are pleased to accept it as a tribute to the work of the organisation which Peter founded and which I am honoured to serve." Benenson, happily retired to Westcott Farm in the Buckinghamshire countryside, wrote to Howard in a letter dated August 1, "Great as the honour is, ... the dinner... is a long way from this farm." He suggested that Ennals could somehow make it to New York and accept the Award for both of them. He also wrote:

... I am delighted that your Board should feel that the work of "Amnesty International" should help to establish peace. As you know, the principal object of "Amnesty", and the motive which caused me to found it in 1961, is the need to guarantee the freedom of unpopular opinions and religious beliefs. Although the work of "Amnesty" in the field of political imprisonment and torture attracts the news media, the truly important feature in my opinion has always been that it has drawn together many thousands of people of differing opinions in numerous countries to work for the release of men and women whose opinions they find obnoxious. As the Chinese proverb goes, "So long as you do not forgive the next man for being different, you are far from the path of wisdom." I do believe that this practical expression of tolerance by "Amnesty's" adoption Groups is a contribution to long-term peace; and I am deeply grateful that your Board recognizes it.

Shortly after he wrote that, he was notified that Amnesty International would be awarded the 1977 Nobel Prize for Peace for "its efforts on behalf of defending human dignity against violence and subjugation." Once again the Gandhi Peace Award had presaged the world's greatest honor.

His path to the Award began in May of 1961 when, as a London attorney, he wrote an article for the *London Observer* entitled "The Forgotten Prisoners". In it he announced a global campaign called Appeal for Amnesty to secure the release (or at least the fair trial) of all prisoners of conscience. Invoking the words of Voltaire—"I detest your views, but am prepared to die for your right to express them"—he began one of the most influential articles ever to appear in a Sunday supplement:

Open your newspaper any day of the week and you will find a report from somewhere in the world of someone being imprisoned, tortured or executed because his opinions or religion are unacceptable to his government. There are several million such people in prison—by no means all of them behind the Iron and Bamboo Curtains—and their numbers are growing. The newspaper reader feels a sickening sense of impotence. Yet if these feelings of disgust all over the world could be united into common action, something effective could be done.

Benenson recalled that the United Nations had approved the Universal Declaration of Human rights in 1945, which guaranteed freedom of beliefs and their expression, but that few countries truly honored them. Most often those imprisoned for deviant expressions are charged with other crimes, such as rebellion or "preventive detention" or mental illness or even "homosexuality". These official subterfuges revealed to Benenson that governments feel defensive about their repressive policies and sensitive to world opinion about them; consequently, "when world opinion is concentrated on one weak spot, it can sometimes succeed in making a government relent." Benenson then gave the *modus operandi* for the campaign would grow into Amnesty International:

The important thing is to mobilise public opinion quickly, and widely, before a government is caught up in the vicious spiral caused by its own repression... The force of opinion, to be effective, should be broadly based, international, non-sectarian and all-party. ... The technique of publicising the personal stories of a number of prisoners of contrasting politics is a new one. It has been adopted to avoid the fate of previous amnesty campaigns, which so often have become more concerned with publicising the political views of the imprisoned than with humanitarian purposes. ... [The Amnesty Campaign] depends on ... the campaign being all-embracing in its composition, international in character and politically impartial in direction. Any group is welcome to take part which is prepared to

condemn persecution regardless of where it occurs, who is responsible or what are the ideas suppressed.

Benenson's article cited many examples of persecution, in the U.S. and Europe as well as in the developing world and the Soviet bloc, and showed deep insight into the power that public opinion has wielded in the past:

...Governments are prepared to follow only where public opinion leads. Pressure of opinion a hundred years ago brought about the emancipation of the slaves. It is now for man to insist upon the same freedom for his mind as he has won for his body.

"How can we discover the state of freedom in the world to-day?" he asked. "The American philosopher, John Dewey, once said, "If you want to establish some conception of a society, go find out who is in jail." Consequently he determined that his Amnesty crusade would focus its human rights work on prisoners. The article concluded with a recitation of the objectives of the Amnesty Campaign:

1. To work impartially for the release of those imprisoned for their opinions.
2. To seek for them a fair and public trial.
3. To enlarge the Right of Asylum and help political refugees to find work.
4. To urge effective international machinery to guarantee freedom of opinion.

In the year after "The Forgotten Prisoners" appeared, support poured in and the Amnesty Campaign sent delegations to four countries to make representations on behalf of prisoners, resulting in over two hundred individual cases. The principles of strict impartiality and independence were refined into specific policies. Parallel efforts were organized in seven countries, compelling the name change to Amnesty International (A.I. for short). "The emphasis was on the *international* protection of human rights: members of A.I. were to act on cases worldwide and not become involved in cases in their own countries," according to an A.I. brochure. "The protection of human rights is an international responsibility, transcending the boundaries of nations and ideologies. This is the fundamental belief upon which the work of Amnesty International, an independent worldwide voluntary movement, is based."

Benenson, and later Ennals as General Secretary, did perceive their great project as a movement. Their organizational plan was open and democratic, they focused on

“growing” thousands of A.I. support groups in as many countries as possible, and they emphasized grass-roots participation in their pressure campaigns against government repression. By the mid-1990s the active participants had soared over one million in 170 countries, with over four thousand groups in fifty-five countries and over three hundred paid staff and ninety volunteers from more than fifty countries. Using research collected in the field and compiled at the International Secretariat in London, they had intervened on behalf of nearly fifty thousand prisoners in most of the world’s nations, including the United States.

A.I.’s activities in the U.S. increased markedly with the return of the death penalty, which A.I. recognizes as “cruel, inhuman, degrading” and inimical to the most basic human rights. As in other nations, U.S. cases often reveal the common method of “disguising” political prisoners by convicting them of false and non-political crimes, or meting out very harsh sentences for crimes that would otherwise be considered relatively minor.²¹

A.I.’s insistence on solid evidence on which to base its appeals has made its research operation a top priority. Hundreds of newspapers and journals, government bulletins, transcripts of radio broadcasts, and reports from lawyers and humanitarian organizations are scanned and compiled. “Information also comes in from prisoners and their families, refugee centres, religious bodies, journalists and other people with first-hand experience,” according to an A.I. statement. “In addition, Amnesty International sends fact-finding missions for on-the-spot investigations and to observe trials, meet prisoners and interview government officials.”

When the facts of a case establish that someone has been imprisoned for reasons of conscience, the case is assigned to one of the local A.I. groups that operate in 170 countries. Group members study the background and then begin writing and calling the responsible authorities with an appeal for the prisoner’s release or fair trial. Cabinet ministers, law enforcement officials, legislators, heads of state are often swamped

²¹ The U.S. government has also been implicated in extreme and chronic human rights abuses through its sponsorship of regimes friendly to U.S. corporate interests in Latin America and elsewhere that maintain power through murder, torture, and repression of any form of dissent. And the tripling of the U.S. prison population in the past decade, with vastly disproportionate representation by African-Americans and Hispanics, has naturally resulted in more

by such appeals, as well as by reports in the local press about the case instigated by A.I. Even the ambassador and trade representatives in the local group's own country are pressured. Prominent individuals are sought to join the appeals, while the prisoner's family may receive relief parcels. Whenever possible, the prisoner is contacted and encouraged to take heart from the international focus on his/her case. The most difficult aspect of the work is to maintain the public concern over time, so that a waning of the limelight does not encourage the government to move against the victim once again.

An A.I. statement admits "that Amnesty International does not oppose political imprisonment as such or ask for the release of all political prisoners." (Presumably a state has a right to protect itself from political activities, such as incitement to violent rebellion, that threaten the public order.) The objective instead is to ensure a fair trial and fair treatment for those convicted of political crimes. On the other hand, prisoners of conscience—those held "by reason of their political, religious or other conscientiously held beliefs or by reason of their ethnic origin, sex, colour or language"—should be released unconditionally.

Amnesty International is currently working on behalf of about eight thousand "named individuals" over two thousand "unnamed individuals" from nearly a hundred nations. In 1995 alone the release of over three hundred "POCs" (A.I. lingo for prisoners of conscience) could be attributed to A.I.'s campaigns, which also spotlighted victims of torture, floggings, exiles, death sentences and officially sponsored death threats, arrests and detentions, "disappearances" and other political murders.

Through its singularly moving and effective action, Amnesty International has become one of the most respected organizations in the world. Its logo, a candle surrounded by a strand of barbed wire, is one of the world's best-known symbols. As Peter Benenson wrote shortly before his retirement:

, "...the candle burns not for us, but for all those whom we failed to rescue from prison, who were shot on the way to prison, who were tortured, who were kid-napped, who 'disappeared'. That's what the candle is for..."

P.E.P.'s Award to the progenitors of Amnesty International had a dual significance in terms of the search for peace. First, it made the statement that, as Benenson suggested in his letter to Howard Frazier, true peace and freedom of belief are inseparable. In 1977-78 the shadow of Vietnam still loomed over the nation, and the popular uprising against its continuation was fresh in every American's mind. But being for peace goes beyond being anti-war. A kind of peace—the mere absence of conflict and disorder—can be imposed through tyranny and oppression, as in *Pax Romana*. But the kind of peace that coexists with freedom of belief and expression can only be achieved through justice and social harmony. The worldwide struggle for such freedom is thus the foundation for the achievement of enduring peace.

Second, it recognized the efficacy of Amnesty International's strategy and tactics and implied the opportunity for the peace movement to adopt them. Whereas nonviolence had been waged primarily through mass demonstrations, often in defiance of the law, A.I. had recognized the emergence of the global community, with its instant telecommunications and shared values, and the opportunity to focus global attention on the plights of specific individuals. While individuals might not have the means to face down a mighty government over a great cause, a worldwide movement could win the release of *this particular prisoner of conscience*, and then *that one*, and then *that one* as well, and so on, until *every* such prisoner was closer to freedom.

In other words, the force of public opinion is normally a light and often ineffective force; but focused on a tiny weak spot in the wall of tyranny, Benenson discovered that it could bore a hole, then another and another, until the entire wall might begin to crumble. The essence, as Benenson wrote in 1961, was to create the apparatus to effect a very fast, exceedingly broad, tightly focused mobilization of international public opinion over a cause that is politically impartial and that has a human face. Given the lightning-speed development of global communications technology, now culminating in the Internet, such an apparatus can be created more easily than ever before. The peace movement has the opportunity to follow Amnesty International's example and to adopt its spectacularly successful tactics, in recognition that neither an enduring peace nor the freedom of belief and expression can ever be achieved unless both are achieved together.

The 1978 Award Ceremony

In a memorandum after the Award ceremony, Howard Frazier recorded that about four thousand invitations had been sent to names on the mailing lists of World Fellowship of Faiths (headed by Willard Uphaus [GPA '70]) and the War Resisters League, but the lists were poorly maintained and many invitations were returned. This plus contacts with several dozen other human rights and peace groups garnered attendance of about a hundred at the Community Church. The cost was now four dollars including dinner provided by Board member Bess Starfield Horowitz. The event was mostly break-even; the shortfall was just sixteen dollars.

Board member Ruth Gage Colby presided over the event. Howard Frazier read remarks from Jerome Davis. Board member Paul Hodel, narrated a slide show highlighting the work of his New Haven Peace and Justice Action Center.

The Award was presented to Martin Ennals by P.E.P president Roland Bainton (who would become its next recipient). Dr. Bainton had composed the inscriptions on the certificates calligraphed by Julia and Leon Winston of Yonkers.

For Ennals the inscription was:

With appreciation for faithfully carrying out the objectives of Amnesty International in its battle against tyranny and repression of human rights. As Secretary General you have brought to the attention of the world the necessity for continual vigilance in opposing oppression and persecution for reasons of race, religion, or conscientiously held belief.

For Benenson the inscription was:

With appreciation for making the international character of conscientious protest a world fellowship in the founding of Amnesty International. In the absence of international control you have initiated the only feasible method of checking the vicious devices in various lands for the suppression of political dissent. Amnesty International and you evoke our highest admiration.

After the Award

Martin Ennals succeeded Benenson at the helm of A.I. in 1968 and served there for twelve years. In 1985 he was interim director of the Article 19 organization, and the following year he became the head of International Alert; both were human rights

groups concerned with the same issues as A.I. In 1991 he left Britain to assume the Ariel F. Sallows Chair in Human Rights at the University of Saskatoon in Canada. In October of that year, before he could begin his new career, he was accidentally killed at the age of sixty-four.

Peter Benenson continues his advocacy of human rights causes. As recently as July 1995 he published a letter from his base at Oxford in the London *Weekly Telegraph* protesting the policy of the United Nations to ignore the existence of Tibet and to shut out the Dalai Lama from the world stage. He concluded, "In the 34 years since I founded Amnesty International, it has campaigned for many wrongfully imprisoned people who were suffering for the sake of their consciences, but the Dalai Lama stands in a class of his own as the world's most famous figure to be exiled."

Chapter Fifteen

1979: Passages in New Haven—Roland Bainton

The end of the 1970s brought important passages for Promoting Enduring Peace, and to mark them the Award returned to New Haven and New Haven's own.

Death came to the very heart of P.E.P that year. Jerome Davis, the parsimonious, peripatetic, peacemaking professor who had founded the organization twenty-seven before and given it his all, passed away in October at the age of eighty-eight. Though he had given up his formal position many years before, he had never ceased to follow P.E.P.'s activities with the utmost attention and to pepper its executive directors with suggestions and comments. His passing left a thunderous silence.

Aline Pfaff, wife of the former Executive Director Roy Pfaff and P.E.P.'s tireless one-person office staff for eight years, also died in 1970. Her husband was in the audience as she was honored along with Jerome.

The third transition was the recognition of Roland H. Bainton, P.E.P.'s president, at the age of eighty-five, a local "character" with world stature in several fields. He was selected via the usual Board vote by mail. The other nineteen candidates included President Jimmy Carter and Beth Horowitz Starfield; but the top seven choices behind Bainton were (from most votes down): Andrew Young; Gen. Hugh Hester; Katherine "Kay" Camp [GPA '84]; Ruth Gage Colby, Coretta Scott King, and Corliss Lamont [GPA '81] in a three-way tie; and Cora Weiss. Bainton, Starfield, and Colby were or had been members of P.E.P.'s Board of Directors.²²

²² Lest it seem that the Board was overly self-congratulatory in nominating so many of its own and selecting one in a single year, Jerome Davis had from the beginning attracted to the Board numerous people who were distinguished peace activists in their own right—a pattern that continues to this day. It is perhaps more remarkable that only three—Dr. Davis himself in 1967, Willard Uphaus in 1970, and Dr. Bainton in 1979—have so far been chosen. In fact, many have been recognized for their progressive achievements by other groups. For example, in April of the same year Dr. Bainton received his Award, Yale Law Prof. Thomas I. Emerson, one of P.E.P.'s original Board members and its treasurer, was honored by the American and Connecticut Civil Liberties Unions at a testimonial dinner in New Haven; it was noted there that U.S. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas had called Prof. Emerson "the outstanding authority in the nation on the First Amendment.

Roland Bainton

Of all the recipients of the Award, Dr. Bainton was the most thoroughly “New Haven”. Known affectionately by the entire Yale community and many city residents as “Roly”, the professor with the kind smile went practically everywhere around town on his trusty battered bicycle, often wearing his tam-o'-shanter. He had spent his entire academic life associated with the Yale Divinity School, from the moment he entered in 1914 to his retirement there forty-eight years later. He was a Yale professor when Benjamin Spock and William Sloane Coffin, Jr., were students there, and actually taught Bill Coffin ecclesiastical history. Yet his vigorous academic career and his persistent peace work took him, time and again, far from the ivied walls.

Dr. Bainton, like his immediate predecessors in the Award, was English by birth. He moved to the United States at the age of eleven. He attended Whitman College, a former seminary in Washington state, which pointed the way to the Yale Divinity School, from which he was graduated in 1917. He received his Ph.D. four years later, during which time he evidenced his lifelong ability to somehow balance rigorous academic work with vigorous efforts against war-making and significant personal relationships: he completed his dissertation and taught religious history at Yale, served with a Quaker unit for conscientious objectors in World War I, and courted Ruth Woodruff, who joined him in a June wedding in 1921. (Over the next decade she bore him five children.)

In 1923 he was appointed assistant professor, in 1932 became associate professor, and in 1936 became Yale Divinity's professor of ecclesiastical history, specializing in the Reformation. A scholar surpassed by none in the life and works of Martin Luther, he published a succession of impressive works, culminating in the 1950s with a series of books now recognized as classics in the history of religion. They include *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther*; *The Travail of Religious Liberty*; *The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*; *Hunted Heretic: A Study of Michael Servetus*; *The Age of Reformation*; *What Christianity Says About Sex, Love, and Marriage*; *Yale and the Ministry*; *Pilgrim Parson*; and *The Life of James Herbert Bainton* (his father). This astonishing list was augmented in the following decades by *The Horizon History of Christianity*; *Erasmus of Christendom*; the three-volume reference *Women of the Reformation*; *Behold, the Christ*; and numerous arti-

cles. His pacifist principles were reflected in his articles about peace and contemporary struggles, and in his Vietnam-era book *Christian Attitudes Toward War and Peace* (1966), which is used extensively today as a text for college courses about religion and the quest for peace.

Versed in eleven languages, he translated and wrote in all of them,²³ demonstrating his belief that “the translator has a two-fold task. He must find the best expression to render the sense of the original, but first of all he must determine what was the best sense of the original. To do so he will have to be a philologist, an historian and a theologian.”

His work endures; a search of the Internet reveals many instances of students and professors today including one or more of these works on their lists of the most influential, most important, or most useful books on religious history and Christianity, and several academic prizes and honors bearing his name have been funded and maintained by admirers.²⁴ He supplemented his print publishing with lectures, conferences, and, later, multimedia works, including a film still available on videotape. Each spring and again in fall he normally devoted two weeks to lecture tours—a pace that he actually doubled in his eighties. He was, along with way, a skilled caricaturist who punctuated his notes with uncanny representations of the academics, artists, and political figures with whom he sojourned.

He was significant to the Yale community and beyond for more than academics. As Leander Keck, former dean of the Divinity School, wrote:

...Roland Bainton embodied vital elements of the School's ethos: continuity of a rich heritage of scholarship, concern for the integrity of the church's witness to the gospel, and engagement with major issues of society. He is remembered as a superb lecturer who never used notes, as a nonconformist with a sense of humor, and as an astute observer of people—in short, a legend on a bike.

A Lutheran clergyman, he was drawn to pacifism and the way of the Friends. During his c.o. service in World War I with the Quakers, he was a medical aide tending the war-wounded in France. Afterward he did his best to exemplify the ideal of sim-

²³ In Japanese, for example, he translated *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther* into *Ware Koko Ni Tatsu: Marutin Rutta No Shogai*.

²⁴ The Roland H. Bainton Book Prize and the Roland Bainton Fund are two examples.

plicity, preferring to traverse up to twenty miles a day using his bicycle instead of a car as “a witness to the simple life,” and reveling as much in silent worship as in a challenging sermon or elaborate liturgy. During World War II he again expressed his pacifist commitment by counseling conscientious objectors and assisting in the relief of refugees. He helped lead a Quaker mission to postwar Germany, endured some calumny and conflict during the McCarthy years, and was involved in efforts to address religious troubles in Latin America. In the pacifist path he saw the original way of Christ; *Christianity Today* once referred to his finding as a pre-eminent historian that for the first several centuries after Christ “there is no evidence whatever of Christians in the army.”

Over the years Dr. Bainton attended academic convocations, ecumenical councils, and pacifist events throughout the world. He interwove the them, in his belief that “when Christianity takes itself seriously, it must either renounce or master the world.” Even his most scholarly work informed his peace work; he once wrote, “The Biblical commentaries of the Reformation are an inexhaustible mine not only for religious but also for political and social ideas.”

After the death of Ruth in 1966, he traveled even more extensively, especially to Japan, where he was part of a series of academic festivals. He participated in the Yale community’s efforts to be counted in the struggle against the Vietnam War, during which time he and his old pupil William Sloane Coffin, Jr., then the chaplain of Yale, had much to say to one another. His contacts for peace and justice were so wide and numerous that the P.E.P. article announcing his Award could rightly say, “He... is familiar in pacifist-oriented church groups everywhere.”

In his later years he drew close to his sister Hilda, of whom he wrote, “For one who has lost a wife, what greater boon than such a sister, with whom to share the memories of the past and the concerns of the present!”

The 1979 Award Ceremony

P.E.P was about to enter a new decade and a new era—the post-Jerome Davis era—and the Award ceremony for 1979 reflected that. For the first time it was in New Haven rather than New York City. Dr. Bainton requested that it be held in Yale’s Sprague Hall, for two reasons: so that his life-long community could conveniently par-

ticipate, and so that his favorite musical accompanist could perform in a fine facility. In his later years he enriched his extensive lecture tours with “the conjunction of my words and the instrumental chords played by the consummate Polish cellist Cecylia Barczyk.” Dr. Bainton had become involved in what he called “the travails of Poland” and had come into contact with Ms. Barczyk there, where she had been playing in public for some time, and at Yale, where she was an advanced student in the School of Music. Her professor at Yale, the Brazilian cellist Aldo Parisot, wrote of her, “When she performs, her musical ideas are convincing and she has the rare gift to be able to communicate them to an audience.” A critic for the Waterbury *American* hailed her “prodigious gifts,” her “technical wizardry that left one gaping in disbelief,” and “an ease and grace that would compare with a young Pablo Casals.” Her performance with piano accompanist Pamela Sverenski of New Haven was a major part of the Award ceremony.

The request by P.E.P. to use Sprague Hall for the October 23 event was at first denied, on the basis that the policy was to reserve it only for official Yale events when school was in session. Because Howard and Alice Frazier were on a tour to Japan at that point, P.E.P.'s secretary, Karen Jacob, took the initiative to call Peter Halsey, Yale's community relations man, and explain the nature of the event. Once she made clear that it was to honor Dr. Bainton—“Oh, you mean *Roly!*”—the hall was immediately secured.

To publicize the event, and reflecting the new local focus, Howard wrote letters and sent press releases not only to area newspapers and the NEW YORK TIMES Connecticut section, but also to downtown New Haven churches and Yale newsletters. (Most printed what he sent almost verbatim.) Rabbi Robert Goldberg of the Congregation Mishkan Israel, one of the original P.E.P. Board members, was enlisted as master of ceremonies. One person at the event said that it was the greatest meeting she had ever attended; Howard wrote Rabbi Goldberg afterward, “The way that you wove all parts together made everyone feel that they were a vital part of every minute of the meeting.”

The location of the event in New Haven had its downside. Board members Ruth Gage Colby and Bess Horowitz Starfield, and Mildred Scott Olmsted, executive direc-

tor of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, who would probably have attended the event in New York, bowed out just beforehand, despite plans that they would all stay overnight with Howard and Alice at the P.E.P. house on the Milford waterfront. Another break with tradition was that the public dinner before the ceremony was replaced by an invitational potluck dinner at P.E.P. Board member Paul Hodel's New Haven Peace and Justice Action Center, limited to the Board, staff, close associates, and ceremony participants, with Dr. Bainton as the guest of honor. These elements—New Haven location, private dinner, local participants—characterized the Award ceremonies from then on.

The presenter of the Award was in a sense local, but international as well. It was the Rev. William Sloane Coffin, Jr., former chaplain at Yale, known and admired by many in New Haven and himself an Award winner [GPA '67], and (best of all for the event) a former pupil and close friend of Dr. Bainton. Rev. Coffin then headed the Riverside Church in New York, one of the truly national churches in the United States, so the Award ceremony was a short train ride away for him. Howard connected with Rev. Coffin at a disarmament conference held the week before the Award ceremony, where they discussed how to make the most of the event.²⁵

Howard introduced Rabbi Goldberg as "one of the area's most outstanding spokesmen for peace and justice," reminding the audience of Dante's words that "the hottest place in Hell is reserved for those who refuse to take a stand. We know for sure that Rabbi Goldberg need have no worries about being in such a place because when there is a burning issue at stake he can be counted on to take a stand for fairness and justice."

News of the death of Jerome Davis just days before added great poignancy to the atmosphere in the Hall, along with similar news about Aline Pfaff. Howard spoke in tribute to both, concluding his eulogy to P.E.P.'s founder as follows:

Jerome Davis's greatest interest in life was to do everything possible to achieve world peace. His lectures, writings, and travels were directed toward this end. All of us who have known him have been inspired and enriched by our association with him. Was are grateful for his full life.

²⁵ Those who strive together for peace see each other at meetings hither and yon, year after year, and form a worldwide circle of friends.

About Mrs. Pfaff Howard said:

At this time we also want to pay tribute to another outstanding peace worker, Aline Pfaff, who died at her home in Tumbling Shoals, Arkansas, on August second. Aline was the wife of the former Executive Director of Promoting Enduring Peace, Roy Pfaff, who is with us tonight. She carried on the “nitty-gritty” work in the office of Promoting Enduring Peace for ten years. Her dedication to the peace movement was reflected in the great contribution she made in and outside the office. She, too, is with us in spirit tonight. Let us all observe a moment of silence in our thanks for these two great souls.

It may be that the remembrance of these two souls' passing gave the event a depth that made speakers, performers, and audience give their all to the evening. In particular, Rev. Coffin exuded a warmth along with his usual power that was remarkable to those in attendance; it is reflected in the photograph that appeared in the *New Haven Register*, in which he is shown with his arm around Dr. Bainton, gazing down with the expression of a grateful son pouring love upon his aged father.

The text of their remarks was not saved. Perhaps Dr. Bainton recalled the words of the subject of much of his scholarly work, Martin Luther:

Cannons and fire-arms are cruel and damnable machines; I believe them to have been the direct suggestion of the Devil. If Adam had seen in a vision the horrible instruments his children were to invent, he would have died of grief.

The Award again featured the calligraphy of designer Leon Winston of Yonkers. Paul Hodel wrote the inscription, which was signed by Willard Uphaus, a 1970 Award recipient and P.E.P.'s vice president. It proclaimed:

*With appreciation for your life-long commitment to peacemaking and
opposing war. Through your teaching and speaking,
your extensive travels, your many books on religion, history
and peace, and your service to numerous groups including
Promoting Enduring Peace and the Religious Society of Friends, you
have touched us all and made lasting contributions
toward building world community.
Willard Uphaus, Vice President*

After the Award

Dr. Bainton died five years later. To honor him, the Yale Divinity School created the Roland H. Bainton Fund to bring to the campus, in Leander Keck's words, “emi-

ment persons whose energies are committed to the causes to which he was devoted—the scholarly task of understanding the history of the church, and the moral task of working for peace with justice.”

Chapter Sixteen

1980: The Peace Counter-Offensive—Helen Caldicott

The first year of the 'eighties was a turning point in history. President Jimmy Carter, who had been elected in 1976 as a progressive, had revealed himself to be as militant a Cold Warrior and friend of tyrants as any President then or since. His advisors had casually pledged to begin winding up the Cold War peacefully within months of his inauguration; instead his administration pushed the nation toward weapons systems deployments, such as MX and Pershing cruise missiles, that put a hair trigger on the fate of the world just as the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty II failed in Congress. Carter's administration also put into effect Directive 59, which determined that the doctrine of nuclear deterrence was becoming obsolete, and that strategic weapons systems needed to be capable of carrying out a successful preemptive first strike. Viewing the President as having abandoned his vision, progressives and many others turned away, ensuring the election of a new President who saw no reason not to veer even closer to the brink. In 1978 military spending worldwide for the first time reached one billion dollars *per day*.²⁶ Again and again, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists advanced their symbolic clock toward the ultimate midnight.

Progressives responded with an energy and clarity that had not been seen since the peak of the anti-Vietnam War movement, effectively launching in 1980 a massive counter-Offensive against the rising, suicidal nuclear militancy of U.S. leaders. On the national level the Nuclear Weapons Freeze campaign emerged from a conference in January 1980. In Connecticut, P.E.P. Board member Paul Hodel coordinated "Survival Summer" that year to focus public attention on disarmament at an unprecedented level. (P.E.P. donated a hefty four thousand dollars to the New Haven area part of the project.) Thousands of people who had never considered participating in anti-nuclear activities were drawn into what quickly grew into a mass movement of mil-

²⁶ Dr. Bernard quoted this statistic in his June 29, 1979 letter to Soviet cardiologist Eugene Chazov suggesting a conference that led to the formation of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War.

lions that determined the nature of peace work for the remainder of the Cold War and very possibly saved the world.

And for the first time the peace and ecology movements made an essential connection in the public mind: it wasn't just nuclear weapons that threatened survival, it was nuclear *anything*—missiles, power plants, pollution, weapons research, waste disposal... (In 1980 the public was still stunned about the near catastrophe at Three Mile Island the year before, the Superfund cleanup act was being passed, and the Chernobyl disaster was still six years in the future.)

The originators of this counter-Offensive were alarmists in the best sense; the essential problem was that the American people were in the dark about the scope and imminence of the nuclear danger facing them and the world. Those who did know were swept up in the desperate need to tell everyone else. One P.E.P. stalwart, Lloyd Potter of Arcadia, Florida, even dressed up as Paul Revere in 1980 and rode a horse through his region alerting everyone he came across. (P.E.P. helped fund the horse.)

The swirling fears, hopes, and commitments were the backdrop for the 1980 Award selection. Out of eleven candidates, the top five were (in order) Helen Caldicott, Corliss Lamont, Board member Thomas Emerson, Andrew Young, and Raymond Wilson. Dr. Caldicott won by a wide margin, becoming the second physician—and the second pediatrician, along with Benjamin Spock in 1968—to have received the Award.

Helen Caldicott

At the center of this movement were three women: Petra Kelly, Randall Forsberg, and Helen Caldicott. Kelly founded the Green Party in Germany, which powered the international anti-nuclear movement.²⁷ Dr. Forsberg [GPA '82] conceived the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign. Dr. Caldicott, as Howard Frazier wrote in his June 1980 letter to members, "is a physician on the staff of Boston's Children's Hospital, and is president of Physicians for Social Responsibility." His letter continued:

²⁷ She once expressed her integration of the political and the spiritual: "Love is not an isolated romantic act between two people; love and life are indissolubly linked with one another. Love must be an integral part of all areas of society, so that it can halt the forward march of isolation, separation and a hostile social order." She was murdered in 1992.

Australian-born and educated, she successfully organized opposition to the French atmospheric nuclear testing in the South Pacific. Last year she published *Nuclear Madness: What You Can Do*. Her husband is a physician and they have three children. She believes that the threat of nuclear war is so great and so close that she is giving up the practice of medicine for two years to devote all of her time and energies to alerting the public to the dangers of a nuclear war.

According to Howard's letters of the time, the P.E.P. reprint of her talk in New Haven became the most popular single piece of literature P.E.P. had distributed since the Vietnam War era. She was in constant demand as a speaker on three continents. A documentary film of her life and work, *Eight Minutes to Midnight*, nearly won the 1981 Academy Award; another documentary featuring her work, *If you Love This Planet*, did win the following year. She resurrected what became the most influential anti-war organization of the time. She was a progressive sensation.

Her transformation from rural Australian girl to international anti-nuclear activist affords an opportunity to consider the ways a person can become "activated" to the cause of peace. Her birthplace did not seem auspicious; Australia is not noted for taking its women seriously. (In 1996 she commented, "Australians are still very sexist. If I speak, they say, 'Who do you think you are? Shut up, you're a woman. ...I don't fit back home.") But her "activation" did begin there, and proceeded along a path with nine milestones.

She came upon her first milestone in her teenage years, when she was transfixed by Neville Shute's 1957 novel *On the Beach*. Set in Australia following an accidental nuclear exchange, the survivors wait for the fallout that will finish off human civilization. Linus Pauling [GPA '62] dubbed it "the book that saved the world." Realistic, exceedingly somber, it understandably impressed any Australian aware of the atomic bombs being exploded by several "world powers" just a thousand miles upwind from the island continent.

Her "commitment to human survival" was further kindled in her early years by the example of British philosopher Bertrand Russell, whose "Ban the Bomb" movement incurred widespread ridicule and hostility but nonetheless was instrumental in bringing about the first treaty to ban above-ground atomic tests in 1962. It was the first sign that the runaway nuclear locomotive could be slowed and someday stopped. She re-

members him as “a man who faced up to the dangers of the atomic age and, despite all odds, dedicated himself to ridding the earth of nuclear weapons.” She was inspired to do no less.

As a medical student, she correlated the atomic testing to lessons she was learning about “what radiation does to genes and how it can both damage future generations and produce cancer. ... And I remember being frightened,” she said twenty years later, “because I realized what the fallout meant to children and babies and people.”

I just watched, with horror, the gradual escalation and buildup of nuclear weapon forces in the United States and England and Russia. ... I felt impotent, as one individual, to do anything about it. Yet I felt, “It’s my world as much as that of any politician in the world.” And when I had children ... I felt that they probably couldn’t have a normal lifespan, or that if they did, their children would not.

Born in 1938 as Helen Broinowski, she grew up in the “boonies” of Adelaide, became a physician in 1960, and two years later married William Caldicott, also a physician. In 1966 they moved to the United States, he to practice medicine, she to accept a fellowship in nutrition at Harvard Medical School.

She came upon her second milestone, when they returned to Australia three years later and she began working in a hospital renal unit. There she pricked her finger and contracted a near-fatal case of hepatitis. When she finally recovered after six months of intensive treatment, she felt her life priorities transformed: “I felt I owed the world something.”

Her third milestone came in 1971, after she returned to Australia and began practicing pediatrics, setting up a clinic for the treatment of cystic fibrosis. She learned that the French had continued their above-ground atomic testing that had been outlawed by the 1962 test ban treaty. “I knew that when an atomic bomb explodes near the earth’s surface, the mushroom cloud that billows into the sky carries particles of radioactive dust,” she recalled in 1982. “Blown from west to east by stratospheric winds, these particles descend to the earth in rainfall and work their way through soil and water into the food chain, eventually posing a serious threat to human life.”

Since few Australians appreciated their predicament, she began by writing a letter to the local newspaper about the fallout drifting into the region, accumulating in the water cisterns that collect rainwater in that dry country. That modest step led to an

invitation to comment as a physician on the situation for Australian television. As the French continued their testing over the next few months, she was invited repeatedly to speak; she used the opportunity to explain about carcinogenic strontium-90 and the means by which it concentrates in milk—especially mother's milk—and reaches small children, who are many times more sensitive to radiation than adults. Her public profile escalated when she exposed a secret government report leaked to her; it revealed that high radiation levels had recently been measured in South Australian rainfall and drinking water. A national citizens' movement formed spontaneously around her. Eminent scientists backed up her warnings, newspapers editorialized against the tests and filled their editorial pages with angry letters, and thousands marched in Australian cities. The French were the immediate target; French products were boycotted, French ships could not be unloaded, and postal employees even refused to process mail to and from France.

The realization at milestone four was just ahead. She recalls joining a delegation of Australians to discuss cessation of the tests with the French government, which claimed that the tests were no threat. "If they're safe," she inquired, "why don't you test them in the Mediterranean?" She recalls their answer: "Oh, *mon dieu*, there are too many people living near there." It was a transformative moment: "For the first time in my life I knew I was sitting opposite wicked politicians who knew they would probably be killing people, and they didn't give a damn." She helped lead the movement that brought the issue before the World Court; France ended the tests. That impression of politicians was confirmed when she spoke to members of the House of Commons in London. With some alarm she thought, "These are the sort of guys are running our world, and our kids' world."

But her own government was different—it seemed. The Labor Party, swept into power in the December 1972 elections by the anti-nuclear fervor, had not only hauled France before the World Court and effectively forced them to wind up its above-ground tests, but had also taken a strong stand against nuclear energy as a source for the country's power. Yet when the world supply of oil was curtailed by the actions of OPEC, the Labor government opportunistically offered to sell its vast uranium resources, the raw material for all nuclear applications, on the open market. Dr. Cald-

icott—at the time “I knew almost nothing about nuclear power”—began to devour books and articles on the subject. If fallout is the “back end” of nuclear fission, she was learning about the “front end”: “the mining, milling, and enrichment of uranium, which decays at every step into radioactive byproducts. “The more I read, the more my hair literally stood on end. It is millions of times more dangerous than fallout from bomb testing.”

Her natural reaction was to see that everyone else’s hair stood on end as well. But with the balance of payments on the line, the official doors that had been wide open for her suddenly shut. Even the media, which had been eager to hand her the microphone for commentary against the French tests, was strangely blasé. “I was very perplexed until I found out that the media had large shares in uranium mines.” It was another transformative moment: learning to “follow the money.” She still emphatically passes on those lessons: “Never trust your leaders; examine their hidden agendas; always be on top of them, not behind them,” she tells her nationwide radio audience.²⁸

Then came milestone five. She turned to the unions, who not surprisingly said they needed the jobs; she could have the floor, but her words would be wasted. She recalled a few years later, “I talked to them about the effect on their testicles and what radiation does to the genes and the sperm... and what nuclear war means to their children... and in ten minutes they were saying, ‘I don’t want my kids growing up in a world like that!’ And gradually—just by... talking to people in factories while they were eating lunch, and teaching them about basic genetics and radiation and nuclear weapons—I taught the unions of Australia that it was dangerous to mine uranium.” The Australian Council of Trade Unions in 1975 passed a resolution not to mine, transport, or sell uranium; it withstood the forces of the multinational nuclear industry for seven years. Her eyes opened, her focus clear, she had learned that her way was to sway those in power by first reaching the people.

Her sixth milestone was her discovery amidst these struggles that she had a genius, more so than any other anti-nuclear crusader on the scene, for assimilating and digesting facts, extracting what they mean for the lives of “children and other living things”,

²⁸ “Helen Caldicott—Fair Dinkum, an Interview with Wendy Perron,” WBAI World Wide Web site, September 1996.

and delivering them in words that are alternately gripping, amusing, stunning, and frightening—words that impel her listeners toward committed action. Her mode is to mix the teaching of genetics and nuclear medicine with humor and facts about nuclear dangers that incite outright terror. In speeches she compared the generation of steam using nuclear fuel rods to the overkill of “cutting butter with an electric saw” and made the rods’ deadliness vivid: “...each rod is so radioactive that if you put a single rod on the ground and you drove past it on a motorbike at ninety miles an hour, it would kill you by intense radiation emission.”

She taught that the effects of radiation are cumulative over a lifetime, and that of all animals on earth human babies are most damaged by it. She explained to general audiences the effects of strontium-90, cesium-137, and the ultimately poisonous (and totally man-made) plutonium: how plutonium continually emits helium nuclei that smash like armor-piercing bullets into the regulatory genes in the body’s cells and induce cancer. She was a fount of chilling contrasts: plutonium is so deadly that a single pound of it, if it were somehow be distributed evenly, could put an end to the human race. Yet each nuclear reactor produces four to five hundred pounds of plutonium each year, often ineffectively monitored and worth hundreds of times its weight in gold on the black market. And the total amount scheduled to be produced by the nation’s nuclear power plants will hit thirty thousand *tons* by 2020... fact after fact, none of them new, yet all of them leaving her audiences gasping with horror.

Then the alarms—as in these bits from her 1980 stunner in New Haven:

We’re talking about a substance so incredibly toxic that everybody who gets it in their lungs will die of lung cancer. You don’t know you’ve breathed it into your lungs. You can’t smell it, you can’t taste it, and you can’t see it. ...It takes a long time to get the cancer. When a cancer develops, I can’t say that cancer is made by plutonium. If I die of a lung cancer produced by plutonium, and I’m cremated, the smoke goes out the chimney with the plutonium, to be breathed into somebody else’s lungs—*ad infinitum* for half a million years.

There’s another area in West Valley, New York, where there are six hundred thousand gallons of high-level waste... They’re very frightened that that stuff will

go critical. If it goes critical, there will be an atomic explosion, and Buffalo will go, along with the other cities surrounding it.²⁹

Do you know we nearly had a nuclear war last November 9th? A fellow plugged a war games tape into a supposedly failsafe computer and the computer took it for real. ...If in twenty minutes it hadn't been stopped, we wouldn't be here right now. ...It was back page in the NEW YORK TIMES! ...This country is totally unaware of the incredible power it holds and the magnitude of destruction inherent in its arsenals.³⁰

Dr. Caldicott also shared her compassion and her vision. She spoke of the insensitivity and denial of those in power, goaded by greed to push ahead with the development of nuclear weapons and energy while children die of thyroid cancer and leukemia as a direct consequence. She appealed to the women within the sound of her voice to transcend the lethal power systems men have created: "It's women who have the babies, and an instinct to protect them; women can start to turn this madness around." She spoke about humanity's fate:

Unless we get rid of all these nuclear weapons, we probably won't survive. It's such a pity. It's taken billions of years for us to evolve, and we're capable of such great love and fantastic relationships and great creativity and art. We're a *magnificent* species. Yet we're so smart, we've learned how to wipe out the whole of life on earth. And we seem to be heading in that direction, like lemmings.

Finally Dr. Caldicott delivered her call to action:

We are the curators of life on earth. We hold it in the palm of our hand. We're at the crossroads of time, right now. ... So you see, it is imperative that we rise up, each one of us, and take the load on our own shoulders. ... We all have to do what I did in Australia and say, "I have to take this responsibility." We've got to rise up for our children and save the human race. ... You've got to teach people the facts. I find that once people understand what is happening to their world, they decide to act. ... We're in danger of destroying most of the world, and nothing matters more than that."

Her seventh transformative milestone came in the late 'seventies. In 1976 the Caldicotts emigrated to the United States permanently, where Helen Caldicott hoped

²⁹ "The Doomsday Scene: Helen Caldicott Speaks for Peace" by Jim Motavalli, *New Haven Advocate*, October 29, 1980.

³⁰ Quoted in "Interview with Helen Caldicott: Waking America Up to the Nuclear Nightmare" by Rob Okun, *New Roots* magazine, 1980, and in 1983 *Current Biography*, p. 48.

to settle into a specialization in cystic fibrosis at the Children's Hospital in Boston and a teaching position in pediatrics at Harvard Medical School. With the election of Jimmy Carter that year and the signing of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1977, a Cold War thaw seemed to be at hand.

In the next two years, that hope crashed into the surging power of the military-industrial complex, as the President overreacted to Soviet missteps in Afghanistan and accepted overestimates of Soviet aggressive capabilities and intentions. He proposed a series of new weapons systems that seemed to make a nuclear exchange with the Soviet Union practically unavoidable:

- It was revealed that the nuclear powers were stockpiling weapons at a feverish rate, in all sizes and types, and that the total number had grown from a few thousand to over fifty thousand in little more than a decade. This trend was to accelerate with a new focus on battlefield tactical nukes and a new generation of undersea doomsday submarines whose officers would be empowered to launch at their own discretion. ‘
- The stealth bomber was still just a rumor, but an ultra-high-tech B-2 was to be built in quantity. Likewise, a new generation of nuclear submarines was about to come on line—each one of which, under the control of its crew, could launch sufficient weapons to decimate a continent; truly, doomsday machines. (One was named the U.S.S. *Corpus Christi!*)
- High-yield MIRV payloads and super-accurate delivery systems, together with a delivery time that provided a response time of no more than twenty minutes, effectively removed any rational hope of civil defense or national survival.
- U.S. military planners, responding to the hopelessly short response time, were urging conversion to “launch on warning” technology that would automatically set the missiles flying upon the automatic satellite detection of a probable Soviet attack.³¹
- The MX missile system, with its cockamamie plan for shuttling super-missiles randomly over thousands of miles of underground railroads, was intended to give the United States the power to wipe out the Soviet Union before it could launch its counter-strike—the U.S. being the only nuclear nation to refuse to pledge never to launch a first strike.

³¹ A technology lampooned in the 1983 film *WarGames*.

- To ensure that Soviet military leaders got no sleep whatsoever, President Carter virtually coerced the European allies into accepting the basing of virtually undetectable Pershing cruise missiles on the very doorstep of the Soviet borders.
- The nuclear power industry, doing its small part to move the big hand closer to midnight, was pushing hard for the export of nuclear reactors and the fissionable materials to run them, regardless of their potential to provide the makings for nuclear weapons and their inherent danger of meltdowns and mega-pollution. Each new reactor (there were more than 260 already) raised the level of background radiation with mutagenic and carcinogenic consequences. And the combination of nuclear power and nuclear war could be deadliest of all: even the smallest tactical nuke could vaporize the core of a nuclear reactor, hurling enough radiation into the atmosphere to render a New England-size region uninhabitable for millennia.

Dr. Caldicott was just one of the anti-nuclear leaders who projected those trends a few years into the future, correlated them with the rising level of saber-rattling from both parties in the U.S. government, and found them converging, inexorably, in nuclear holocaust. In Australia she had discovered that the deadly threat of atomic fallout was a shadow of the danger of nuclear power. Now she characterized nuclear power at its worst as “a pimple on a pumpkin” compared to the inconceivable danger of nuclear war. As in Australia a few years before, the only rational hope seemed to be to raise a worldwide public furor so intense that not even the nuclear locomotive could stay on track. To Dr. Caldicott the situation required, for perhaps the first time in human history, an all-out campaign literally to save the world—and possibly some prayer.

In 1978 and 1979 events brought her eighth milestone. Her part in ensuring the world's survival amidst the nightmarish historical endgame unfolding seemed to require that she think the unthinkable and inspire others to do likewise. Yet to maintain a sane life for her husband and children, she said in 1980, “most of the time I don't think about it.” Referring to the theory of “psychic numbing” postulated by Yale psychiatrist and peace activist Robert Jay Lifton [GPA '83], she said, “I pretend that life will go on. I sew for the kids. I make cakes and look after the family. That's where my joy comes from—the family, the earth, other people. LIFE's a fantastic, precious thing. I don't think about it ending except when I write or talk about it.”

For the first time in her life she began to look beyond herself for inner strength. She began to meditate, and then to pray. As she said in 1980, "I get a lot of strength from that. Until two years ago I was an atheist. But now I believe there is some force you can tap into and it certainly helps me... a higher force in me that gives me strength [and] tells me the right thing to do ... For me, it's a religious commitment to continue evolution, to continue God's creation. ... I wake up every morning and I thank God that the planet is still here."³²

An answer to her prayers came in 1978 when Dr. Caldicott convened a meeting of the moribund Physicians for Social Responsibility (P.S.R.) with ten colleagues in her home. With her participation the organization began to revive. On March 28 of the following year, one of the nuclear reactors at Three Mile Island nearly melted down, inspiring a wave of fear and an avalanche of membership inquiries to P.S.R. from physicians determined to do something to address the nuclear danger. During the next two years Dr. Caldicott presided over the organization as it grew to a membership of thousands (including twenty thousand doctors), a paid staff exceeding thirty, and a budget well over a million dollars. It became possibly the most compelling single voice for waking the general public from its nuclear stupor.

Her ninth milestone, the last before accepting the Award, came in 1979 and 1980, when she resolved to put her medical career on hold and resigned from the Harvard Medical School to devote her full time to "peace agitation". In 1979 she traveled to the Soviet Union as part of an American Friends Service Committee (A.F.S.C.) delegation, along with William Sloane Coffin, Jr. [GPA '67], P.E.P. Board member Marta Daniels (who was also A.F.S.C. field secretary for Connecticut), and other peace activists. There her medical credentials served her well; although she could not secure an interview with Leonid Brezhnev, she reached high enough to make a connection with his cardiologist. The following year, along with receiving the Award and expanding P.S.R., she helped start the Medical Campaign Against Nuclear War in England and, in the U.S., the Women's Party for Survival. She helped found similar groups throughout northern Europe, did a speaking tour in her home country, and was a fea-

³² From Robert Okun article, *op. cit.*

tured speaker in Hiroshima at the observance of thirty-fifth anniversary of the first nuclear massacre. There was no more effective or influential peace activist in the world.

The Women's Party for Survival was special to her. (She sometimes spelled it "Wo-men's Party" and invited men concerned about their women and children to join, too.) Founded on August 6, Hiroshima Day, of 1980, it combined her roles as a peace activist, a woman, and a mother, and was designed to have some impact on the Presidential elections. (She called Jimmy Carter "a wolf in sheep's clothing" and Ronald Reagan "a *wolf* in wolf's clothing.") Her party, she hoped,

"would include every woman in this country... When women hear the warning, they blossom and a tremendous power becomes mobilized. ... We have the babies; we nurture life. The first priority of women... is the survival of our offspring, and this survival is endangered by the present militaristic policies of those in power... We have tremendous power. It's part of being a mother to make sure the world is safe for our babies. The situation we're in today demands a revolution for survival."³³

In April she called on "all women with their babies, children, husbands and friends" to bring apple pies to the Pentagon and the offices of their elected representatives on the day after Mother's Day and keep coming back every day, changing and bathing and strolling babies and otherwise reminding those traversing the corridors of power that moms and kids do exist and that "all legislation must be directed to protect their lives. ...[keep coming back] as long as it takes to convince them that they must [legislate] to end the arms race, to cease the manufacture of more nuclear weaponry and finally to decommission all existing nuclear weapons. ...Our motto is 'WE WANT TO LIVE.'" After the election the Party evolved into Women's Action for Nuclear Disarmament—WAND—which survives to the present day.

Dr. Caldicott and the many who joined her (including most of those honored by P.E.P. during the 'eighties) succeeded in awakening the public to the extent that the nuclear locomotive was slowed. During the 'eighties, following the Nuclear Weapons Freeze campaign, the militant anti-nuke actions, and the continuing revelations about pollution, the growth of nuclear power reversed itself, the world's nuclear arsenals

³³ Part excerpted from "A Mother's Day Pentagon March" in *WHOLE LIFE TIMES*, September-October 1980.

peaked in size, and overt environmental irresponsibility became at least unfashionable. It is not pleasant to consider where those in power might have taken things had they not been forced to respond to this public upsurge for freedom from nuclear terror.

Helen Caldicott's journey from Australian country girl to world peace movement leader, and her encounter with the nine milestones described, could serve as a template for the path of awakening that leads to committed, productive progressive activism. In summary:

Milestone One: The early inspiration from her exposure as a child to *On the Beach* and the example of Bertrand Russell. The seeds of activism can be tiny as mustard seeds if they are planted early. The writings and actions of activists, however insignificant they may appear today, can be the seeds that bear the fruits of peace and sanity tomorrow.

Milestone Two: Her near-fatal illness awakened her to the finitude and preciousness of life, and to her personal debt to life. That awakening, and that sense of responsibility—not to family or country but to life itself—gives activism a depth and positive energy that can be irresistible.

Milestone Three: Her initial commitment was to a specific issue, obvious and close at hand. Following the connections and causes of that issue led her to the wider analysis that informed her lifelong commitment.

Milestone Four: She began with an innate faith in authority. Moving toward her goal of change, she inevitably met the resistance of those who identified their interests with the status quo and encountered their venality and ruthlessness. Her disillusionment opened the way for effective action.

Milestone Five: She found she could achieve some part of her goal by working through the power structure. But significant change came from building a power base from the grass roots up, by alarming citizens about the immediate danger, giving them the facts and background to appreciate the root causes, and inciting them to join her in committed action.

Milestone Six: She began her career pursuing a medical vocation. As she moved step by step, educating herself and sharing her perspective on the issues, she discovered her gifts as motivator of movements. The activist whose commitment

arises from compassion and intelligence discovers that “our life is more than our work, and our work is more than our job,” and that we are given the gifts we need to make a difference.

Milestone Seven: Her response to the immediate danger of nuclear catastrophe was a total personal commitment to mass action for survival. The effective activist has the courage to face the true implications of the facts and respond rationally to them, transcending the “psychic numbness” that maintains the trance state of “everyday life”. The question of survival “concentrates the mind wonderfully.”

Milestone Eight: She could handle the scope and immediacy of issues such as nuclear testing and even nuclear power with her own psychological resources. But as the enormity of the system that was driving humanity toward ultimate holocaust became clear to her, she discovered inner spiritual resources and her own need for the Power that could sustain her and keep her balanced and human amidst the tumult and danger.

Milestone Nine: Her path did not lead where she expected. Trained in medicine, distinguished in the treatment of cystic fibrosis, she grew toward a higher definition of health care and the physician’s responsibility. With each step her way became more clear. At last she saw that medical practice has been her provisional career, not her true vocation. In embracing her destiny as a progressive activist and educator, she achieves the universal goal of doing: a life in which what she *has* to do and *should* do and *wants* to do and *gets* to do and actually *does* are all one and the same. As she expressed it in 1980 and still lives it today:

In the face of catastrophe, to do nothing and be passive is very depressing because you feel so powerless. But if you *try* to do something, it’s the most exciting action you can take. If I’m feeling I’m having an effect and other people are starting to be mobilized, there’s a *tremendous* reward. So I say to myself, “Even if this bomb goes off, at least I’ll be able to say I tried. ...Every single one of us can be as powerful as Henry Kissinger or Jimmy Carter, because we inherited the Earth just as they did. It’s our birthright.”³⁴

³⁴ Robert Okun article, *op. cit.*

The 1980 Award Ceremony

The ceremony was scheduled for the evening of Saturday October 18th to coordinate with a symposium on "Human Health and Nuclear War" at Yale Medical School. The symposium, presented by Health Professionals for Social Responsibility (an offshoot of Dr. Caldicott's P.S.R.), also featured talks from Yale health professionals Jack Hughes and Robert Jay Lifton [GPA '83], arms control expert Herbert Scoville, and A.F.S.C. field secretary Marta Daniels about the health consequences of nuclear war and the myths and realities of the Soviet threat. The climax was Dr. Caldicott's concluding address to a packed house. As the New Haven Advocate reported,

The all-day event was a symphony of horrors. It was Helen Caldicott's talk that brought all the information together ...The urgency in her voice, the near desperation, was unmistakably there. She was given a standing ovation, and several people were led away in tears."³⁵

Before the Award ceremony, Board member Paul Hodel hosted a potluck dinner at his New Haven Peace Education and Action Center for Dr. Caldicott, Board members, and a few others. He also served as master of ceremonies for the Award presentation, held at the parish house of New Haven's Center Church on the Green. Admission was free.

Local performers Jonathan and Deborah Hutchinson and singer-songwriter Cyd Slotoroff sang for the standing-room-only crowd of about two hundred. Slotoroff, who knew that Dr. Caldicott's message would touch on the fears parents have about nuclear war, had written a song especially for the event. Titled "Rest In Peace", it turned on the dual meaning of that phrase. Evoking a mother's realization that she can no longer shield her child from the nuclear danger, she sang, "Gone are the days when you could run and make it on your own / Gone are the days when you could rest in peace alone."³⁶

Marta Daniels was designated to make the presentation. Mindful of Dr. Caldicott's inclination to mordant humor, she announced "awards that Helen Caldicott will never receive" such as:

³⁵ "The Doomsday Scene: Helen Caldicott Speaks for Peace" by Jim Motavalli, NEW HAVEN ADVOCATE, October 29, 1980.

³⁶ © 1981 by Cyd Slotoroff. From her first recording, *We Always Know*.

THE DON'T ROCK THE BOAT AWARD, given by the Society for the Preservation of the Status Quo, to a citizen who has done the *least* to stir people up, challenge conventional wisdom, and raise embarrassing questions...

THE RED MENACE AWARD, given faithfully for the last thirty-five years by the Committee on the Present Danger at military budget time. This award goes to the person or persons conjuring up the scariest Soviet Threat stories of the year.

...Helen Caldicott... believes that the Red Menace is an incurable American disease which afflicts the entire body politic. ...Helen believes immunities to the Red Menace disease might one day be developed with some good common sense, a strong and regular dose of rationality, and a more highly developed cooperative spirit.

THE PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY AWARD, given by the AAWWKTP (American Association of Women Who Know Their Place), to a woman who best personifies the virtues of docility, submissiveness, unscientific thought, and avoidance of controversial issues. Helen will never do for this one...

As in past years, Leon Wilson of Yonkers, New York, calligraphed and framed the Award certificate, for which Paul wrote the inscription:

With appreciation for your commitment and courage in alerting people throughout the world to the dangers of the nuclear arms race and nuclear power. Through your writing and speaking, your extensive travels around the globe, and your leadership of groups such as Physicians for Social Responsibility and the Women's Party for Survival, you are practicing the ultimate form of preventive medicine, mobilizing women and men to be curators of life and to be responsible for the survival of our world.
Roland H. Bainton, President

After the Award

Since 1980 Dr. Caldicott has sustained her tireless pace, lecturing, touring, organizing, producing scores of articles, films, and tapes, and authoring *Missile Envy* and *If You Love This Planet*. (Her classic *Nuclear Madness* was revised and republished in 1995.) She has met with heads of state throughout the world and was, as far as we know, the only peace activist ever to meet with President Reagan—a meeting of over one hour arranged by Patti Davis—in December of 1982. She founded the International Physicians to Save the Environment, ran for and nearly lost a seat in the Australian parliament, garnered a tremendous ovation at the 1994 U.N. Earth Summit in

Rio de Janeiro, and continued to inspire peace activism in thousands. (Meryl Streep said, "Helen Caldicott has been my inspiration to speak out.")

With her husband Bill, an award-winning peace activist in his own right, she continues her impressive blend of teaching and inciting to action, vividly making the connection between nuclear weapons, nuclear power, unsustainable energy use, oil dependence, environmental degradation, and the dangers humanity still faces. Yet she calls herself a conservative: "I'm for conserving lives." From her podium on New York's WBAI radio and her countless other forums, she reminds listeners that thirty-five thousand poorly-controlled nuclear weapons continue to threaten the world. She says:

It's all about power and control versus compassion. Only when a person or a country admits their own wrong-doing to themselves and others do they mature, and this nation has not yet grown up. ... I believe that in a dark time, the eye begins to see. It's not dark enough yet. And, please, God, let it become dark enough so that the eye does begin to see, but not so dark that we actually blow up the world. We must awake from our false sense of security and commit ourselves to using democracy constructively to save the human species.³⁷

³⁷ WBAI Interview with Wendy Perron, *op. cit.*

Chapter Seventeen

1981: The Patrician Progressive—Corliss Lamont

In the midst of the rising public concern about the dangers of nuclear war and nuclear power, incited in no small measure by reckless statements emanating from the new Reagan administration, P.E.P. determined that the time was right to honor one of the progressive movement's senior fellows, Corliss Lamont.

The solicitation for Award nominations in March yielded a plenitude of outstanding candidates. The thirty-six members of the Board were sent a list with a few paragraphs about each candidate's qualifications, and asked to vote by July 1st for their first through fifth choices. Leading the alphabetical list³⁸ was Leonard Bernstein, the pre-eminent American conductor/composer and outspoken liberal, followed by environmentalist and Presidential candidate Barry Commoner, A.F.S.C. peace educator Russell Johnson, Corliss Lamont, Admiral Gene LaRocque of the Center for Defense Information, disarmament activist Alva Myrdal, scholar and peace activist John Somerville [GPA '87], progressive unionist William Winpisinger, and 1980 Citizen's Party Senatorial candidate and P.E.P. Board member Lou Zemel. (William Sloane Coffin was nominated for his peace work as senior minister of Riverside Church in New York, but since he had already received the award in 1967, his name was not presented to the Board.)

Of the nine candidates, two received almost twice as many votes as any of the other candidates: Alva Myrdal and Corliss Lamont. Mme. Myrdal, described in her nomination as "one of the outstanding women of the 20th century," was a Swedish diplomat who led her country into unilateral renunciation of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons and was a prominent participant in the 1978 United Nations Special Session on Disarmament.

In late May Board members received a photocopied note from Howard Frazier (transcribed in secretary Karen Jacob's handwriting) suggesting:

³⁸ The custom of listing nominees and the descriptions of their accomplishments alphabetically probably gives an advantage to nominees whose last names begin with the letters A through M. As of 1996, three-quarters of the last names of all Award recipients start with letters from

Unless you have strong desires for a certain nominee, you may be willing to consider voting for Corliss Lamont. He has been one of P.E.P.'s staunchest supporters from the beginning, both financially and otherwise. He is now eighty-five years old. His getting the award would cap a long and distinguished life in which he has contributed so much to great causes. Please don't let me influence your choice if you prefer someone else.

In the final count, Dr. Lamont's score was two votes higher than Mme. Myrdal's. Later that year the announcement was made: she had won the Nobel Peace Prize.

Corliss Lamont

The ties between P.E.P. and Dr. Lamont were strong and long-standing. A testimony to those ties is an open letter written by Dr. Lamont to President Kennedy, an eloquent denunciation of Kennedy's intervention in Vietnam and an uncanny prophecy of the course of the war to come, published in the April 11, 1962, issue of the NEW YORK TIMES. A third of the nationally prominent cosigners were affiliated with P.E.P., either as Board members or as Award recipients.³⁹ The initial link was P.E.P. Board member and Yale Law School professor Thomas Emerson, a renowned authority on constitutional law who, like Dr. Lamont, had been on the board of the A.C.L.U.

Next to his signature Dr. Lamont had identified himself as "Author and Educator", but he was much more than those. He was heir to great wealth and generous with it, but he was more than a philanthropist.

He was the consummate progressive generalist—socialist, civil libertarian crusader, humanist philosopher, environmentalist, peace activist—involved in a full range of progressive causes; a leader in many but not preoccupied by any one; eager to put his views before the public and to do something about them; willing to take on scoundrels of whatever stripe and face the consequences; and above all wholly dedicated to making his life a contribution to humanity. He used his formidable intellect, his array of contacts, his considerable material resources, and his nine decades of living well in a focused effort to forward those goals.

the first half of the alphabet.

³⁹ P.E.P. president Roland Bainton [GPA '79], Linus Pauling [GPA '62], Dr. Lamont [GPA '81], P.E.P. treasurer Fowler Harper, and Board member (and future treasurer) Thomas Emerson. Prof. Emerson secured most of the signatures for Dr. Lamont by calling on like-minded professors, especially from Yale.

The Making of a Progressive

He was old-line wasp from the outset. His father, Thomas S. Lamont, was the son of “a country parson of slender means” and a descendent of men who fought in the Revolutionary War. Mr. Thomas inherited his father’s liberal Christian values, but also went into the banking business and rose to its summit. His mother, Florence Corliss Lamont, was descended from Mayflower stock; she hosted home soirées that glittered with leading political and cultural figures and contributed to Corliss’s wide world view. “Born into wealth” in 1902, the NEW YORK TIMES wrote of him, “the scion of the chairman of J.P. Morgan & Company, Dr. Lamont grew up with privilege, attended Phillips Exeter Academy and Harvard University like his father, and might have had the life of a patrician on Wall Street. Instead he cast his lot into the arena of radical causes.”

In his autobiography, *Yes to Life*,⁴⁰ he recalls early choices between principle and expediency within the cloisters of school, and points to the seeds of his later radicalism. He recalled learning about Jesus in Presbyterian Sunday school and discovering “a fervent wish to live up to his ethical ideals.” At Phillips Exeter he exposed the baseball coach for “baking” the ball his team was pitched to make it fly farther when hit, and had to face down a dangerous mob of schoolmates who were willing to cheat for victory. While at Exeter he was editor of the school newspaper, secretary of the literary magazine, and president of the debate team, initiating what he called “the great mistake of my life, that of taking on too many interests and responsibilities.”

At Harvard he slaved away on the *Crimson* and was drawn into meetings of the Harvard Liberal Club. His early positions were the reasonable transition between his childhood impression of Jesus’s teachings and the socialism he would embrace later. He attacked the exclusionary nature of Harvard’s fraternity-like student clubs (including his own) and, after graduating with high honors, raised relief funds for cleaning women whom Harvard had fired to make a point against a new minimum wage law. He helped to found the Harvard Debating Union with a fellow member of the Class of '24, Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., “son of the U.S. Senator most responsible for maintain-

⁴⁰ Corliss Lamont, *Yes to Life: Memoirs of Corliss Lamont* (New York: Horizon Press, 1981).

ing America's isolationist policies,"⁴¹ and together they defined the moderate left and right on campus.⁴²

Despite his liberal outlook and outspoken concern for the excluded and downtrodden, he remained close to his father, who agreed with his son in adamantly supporting the League and later the United Nations—a commonality Corliss often cited when attacked for crossing his father's views and class interests. Corliss was far from a "red diaper baby", but, as he wrote, he and his parents shared "our unrelenting efforts on behalf of birth control, civil liberties, the flourishing of poetry and international peace." His father's positions on social issues "effectively contradicted the widely accepted stereotype of rich people and Republicans as conservative or reactionary plutocrats opposed to all forms of progress and liberalism." His mother was on the board of the New School for Social Research, where Corliss later taught. One right-wing writer attacked the three of them in a piece called "Sowing the Wind and Reaping the Whirlwind."⁴³

Though a life of high-stakes commerce or high-priced leisure was presumably open to him, his seriousness about life and his remarkable intellect pointed him toward an academic path, the progress along which has little to do with one's parentage or assets. After Harvard and Phi Beta Kappa, he took a year at Oxford and then earned a Ph.D. while lecturing in philosophy at Columbia.

By then the direction of his life was set. As student vice-chair of the Harvard Union he had proposed that the Union should be addressed by Socialist Party president Eugene Debs, Communist labor organizer William Foster, and radical economist Scott Nearing, so that students could hear all viewpoints, including those on the left. (Nearing later was part of several P.E.P. peace delegations.) Although he then considered socialism "undesirable and impractical" (along with the rest of his Harvard

⁴¹ Frederick Edwards, "Requiem for a Freedom Fighter", *THE HUMANIST*, July-August 1965

⁴² Two generations later he reminded Henry Jr., by then U.S. Ambassador to South Vietnam, of their "running debate ever since that time concerning the basic issues that have confronted our country and the world" in an open letter urging him to resign to protest the Vietnam involvement. (*NEW YORK TIMES*, November 1, 1965)

⁴³ In 1917 the elder Lamont even advised Woodrow Wilson to cooperate with the Bolsheviks in the Russian Revolution as a way to strengthen the war effort against Germany; instead Wilson sent troops to topple the new Soviet government, setting the tone of U.S.-Soviet relations from then on.

chums), the intense reaction against the proposal, and the sense of urgency that students not be exposed to socialism, inspired him to undertake a serious study of the subject. He was also swept up in the excitement attendant to the Russian Revolution, especially through the writing of fellow Harvard alum John Reed, author of *Ten Days That Shook the World*.⁴⁴ At the same time, his interest in humanism and his identification of religion with superstition took root and led to his Ph.D. dissertation topic on views of the afterlife, which he expanded into a book entitled *The Illusion of Immortality* (1935). Although those two commitments—to socialism and humanism—were extensions of his childhood commitment to the example of Jesus⁴⁵, they began his long career of being out of the mainstream of his society, and usually ahead of it.

Lamont the Socialist

His path to socialism “was that of analysis through reason,” as he wrote. The upper class value of public service, as in *noblesse oblige*, his school lessons that America means democracy and equality of opportunity, his ethical commitment to consideration for others pointed him toward a governmental system based on the values of cooperation and sharing. The experience of watching the economy collapse in 1929, when he was twenty-seven, solidified it. Events demonstrated to him and many others in those years that capitalism, with its boom and bust cycles, its inflation and underemployment, and its survival-of-the-fittest mentality, could not produce the humane society any humanist would seek.

He was, with his first wife, a Democratic Socialist. In his view, capitalism’s concentration of wealth at the top (“capital formation”) sucks purchasing power from the majority, undermining the social pyramid and causing the system’s inherent instability. That instability manifests as economic crises and wild swings in inflation, unem-

⁴⁴ In the early 'thirties Dr. Lamont organized a campaign among Harvard alumni to honor Reed through the commissioning of a portrait and a biography. The resulting portrait now hangs in Adams House at Harvard; the resulting biography is *John Reed—The Making of a Revolutionary* by Granville Hicks, Harvard '23.

⁴⁵ At one family Christmas gathering he called Jesus “a selfless martyr for the cause of humanity [who] displayed in his teachings and actions a radically democratic spirit and a deep sense for the fundamental equality of man. ... Thinking of his great and radiant personality, we rededicate ourselves this day to the struggle for international peace and understanding; for equality and freedom among all countries and races; for a living democracy that penetrates every sphere of human existence.” [*Yes to Life*, *ibid.*]

ployment, and productivity. Even worse, the system relies on over-consumption and what Dr. Lamont termed “war preparations” to keep things from toppling; this he observed in the 1930s, and as the decades passed he saw the use of these inherently destructive devices increase geometrically and ravage the earth. Could capitalism not produce public works as an alternative, to stabilize the economy while addressing real human needs? “Experience has confirmed,” he wrote in 1981—mindful of the New Deal and presaging of the fate of the Great Society—“that so long as capitalism exists, no program of large-scale public works will be permitted to transcend temporary emergency programs, to be discarded as soon as the economy shows signs of returning to what appears on the surface as normal.”

He saw democratic socialism—as opposed to Marxist socialism based on the dictatorship of the proletariat—as the only way to cure the rapacious waste, the economic crises, and “the tragic paradox of poverty amidst potential plenty. ... Today we know that in industrially developed nations there is enough goods-producing machinery to ensure a high standard of living for all the people.”

Democratic socialism implied to Dr. Lamont government planning to control “output, prices, wages, hours of work, and finance,” maintaining the equilibrium between purchasing power and production. The public would own the utilities, transportation, and large manufacturing, distribution, and service enterprises, which would coexist with privately owned small businesses of all kinds. Whereas “under capitalism, countless fine individual intelligences and abilities continually work in competition with or against one another,” under socialism the planning and control in place of competition “would release and coordinate frustrated talents, bringing into action a concert of community minds operating on behalf of the common good and embodying the life of reason in social-economic affairs.”

He had observed first-hand how socialist planning in the U.S.S.R. transformed an economically backward, agricultural, mostly illiterate country into a “dynamic, forward-moving economy.” Without that transformation, he failed to see how that nation could have survived the Nazi onslaught and made its decisive contribution to the Allied victory. After the war, with its untold devastation of the country and its twenty

million killed, the Soviet five-year plans coordinated the miraculous recovery that made the nation the other world power.⁴⁶

Dr. Lamont saw a potential for democratic socialism in developed nations to bring economic abundance sufficient to support “far-reaching cultural advances.” He noted that existing socialist societies, however imperfect so far, have already “multiplied the production of cultural goods—books, school buildings, radios and t.v. sets, musical instruments, theatres and the like”—and produced many more teachers and artists, who are much better paid. Socialism relies on an idea of cultural merit, which, however flawed, is superior to evaluating culture purely in terms of its monetary value. More important, the refocusing of values away from individual material success and competition and toward altruistic and communitarian motives “entails a higher ethical philosophy than capitalism, and one more profoundly in harmony with the enlightened social ideals of Christianity.”

Most compelling to him was his view that socialism is better equipped to fulfill the egalitarian promise of democracy. “Since fascism is basically capitalism stripped of democratic pretenses and other inessentials,” the possibility of the resurgence of fascism inevitably underlies capitalism. The oppression of minorities, especially when they are economically unproductive, is a consequence of the social competition that accompanies the economic competition of capitalism. The cooperative ideal at the root of socialism logically extends to equal rights and social acceptance for all minorities and for the largest oppressed group: women.

Dr. Lamont did not maintain the Marxist view that life is a class struggle between workers and owners. He noted the conservative role played in America by “big labor” in recent decades, contrasted with the leadership provided by middle-class intellectuals in struggles for social and environmental progress. A life-long advocate of a constitutional evolution to the new system, he did not think of himself either as a proletarian revolutionary or “as a member of the capitalist class who ought to be opposed to the working class, but simply as an American citizen doing his best to help build a better

⁴⁶ The fall of the U.S.S.R. in 1990 did not fundamentally alter his perspective. He viewed the Soviet national collapse not as a failure of socialism but as the consequence of the exhaustion of the national treasury in a war of “war preparations” with the United States, which as the leader of Capitalism had the credit to go deeply into debt to postpone its own collapse.

America and a better world. And I conceive of socialism as improving the condition not only of the working class, but also of the middle class and indeed of everybody except a tiny upper-class minority.”

Lamont the Humanist

The same philosophical rigor and independence that caused Dr. Lamont to embrace socialism despite the dominant economic system led him to likewise embrace what he called “naturalistic humanism” despite the dominant religious culture. He found no scientific justification for a belief in what he called “superstitious Christianity” or other belief in a supernatural divine personage behind events.

This position was reinforced by the publication in 1933 of *The Humanist Manifesto* by twenty-four philosophy professors, clergymen, and authors (John Dewey was among them) outlining a system of belief that rejected the dualism of mind and body and “all forms of theism and supernaturalism,” and giving supremacy to human “development and fulfillment in the here and now... in the light of the scientific spirit and method.” Dr. Lamont appended the rejection of pantheism and metaphysical idealism and defined the supreme human aim “to be the welfare, happiness, and progress of all humanity in this one and only life, according to the methods of reason and science, democracy and love. ...not Christian service to an improbable God, but service here and now to our fellow human beings.”

His version of humanism was clarified through his Ph.D. dissertation and his 1935 book *The Illusion of Immortality* debunking the belief in the afterlife.⁴⁷ He agreed with William James that for most people the belief in God is primarily a *deus ex machina* to save them from the extinction they dread above all, making possible the belief in a benign afterlife; take away one, he felt, and the other goes as well. Rather than a thing to be dreaded, he described death as the ultimate affirmation:

It is nature’s way to affirm life through death. ... We die to make room for newborn and lustier vitality. Generation after generation of youths and maidens, men and women, have their chance to taste the joys of living and to make their

⁴⁷ The Rev. John Haynes Holmes, GPA recipient exactly twenty years before Dr. Lamont, wrote a book in reply, *The Affirmation of Immortality*.

own particular contribution to the never-ending human adventure. Such is the meaning of death.⁴⁸

His three heroes in philosophy, John Dewey, Bertrand Russell, and George Santayana, “were all essentially humanist.” Dewey, whose likeness has appeared on the U.S. thirty-cent stamp as the founder of progressive education in the United States, was like Dr. Lamont a Democratic Socialist, and was a professor at Columbia when Dr. Lamont was a student there and invited the young man to parties at his home. Later his favorable review of *The Illusion of Immortality* became the introduction to that book. Bertrand Russell likewise contributed a forward to his 1956 book, *Freedom Is As Freedom Does*, and entertained him at his home in Wales; during the 1960s the two carried on “a voluminous correspondence” about civil liberties, world peace, and U.S. aggression against Vietnam. Dr. Lamont was a frequent contributor to Russell’s project to expose U.S. war crimes in the Vietnam War. In 1970 Dr. Lamont spoke at Russell’s funeral, recalling his words, “Three passions, simple but overwhelmingly strong, have governed my life: the longing for love, the search for knowledge, and unbearable pity for the suffering of mankind.” There he called Russell “the world’s outstanding representative of the humanist philosophy... who stepped out of the study to put ethical ideals into action.” George Santayana—philosopher, playwright, essayist, novelist, and tireless crusader for reason over any non-rational form of belief—responded promptly and positively to the receipt of Dr. Lamont’s book rejecting the afterlife, initiating a correspondence over sixteen years and terminated only by Santayana’s death. (He later wrote books and supported other remembrances of all three.)

In 1941 he became one of the first members of the newly founded American Humanist Association (A.H.A.). Beginning in 1946 he taught a lecture course at Columbia for thirteen years that he titled “The Philosophy of Naturalistic Humanism.” From it he developed *The Philosophy of Humanism*, published in 1949, which to this day is the standard work on the subject.⁴⁹ In it he wrote, “Humanism contends that instead of

⁴⁸ Quoted in “Memorial Service Materials,” a publication of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Amherst and distributed via the Internet.

⁴⁹ A search for “Corliss Lamont” through the forty million-odd on-line pages of the Internet produces references to *The Philosophy of Humanism* in far greater numbers than political references. It appears that “Lamont the Humanist” may be the one who will be remembered in

the gods creating the cosmos, the cosmos, in the individualized form of human beings giving rein to their imagination, created the gods.”⁵⁰

His consistent and articulate advocacy of humanism earned him the title of President Emeritus of the A.H.A., which he served in many ways through the years, including representing the organization at Bertrand Russell’s funeral in 1970. He was also an author and signer of *Humanist Manifesto II* in 1973 and winner of the Humanist of the Year award in 1973. In 1981, the year he accepted the Gandhi Peace Award, he summed up his vision and life’s goal in a few simple words:

the liberation of the human spirit in a world of beauty, and a world at peace.

Lamont the Peace Activist

By his early thirties he was becoming known for being “militantly for world peace and disarmament, a backer of the League of Nations, opposed to imperialist exploitation and rule over so-called backward peoples... a left liberal or moderate radical.”⁵¹ That in turn led him and most other “left liberals” during the first half of the century to adamantly oppose the rise of fascism and strongly sympathize with the Soviet Union, whose founders had cast aside capitalism, imperialism, and the ethic of self-interest to begin building the world’s first socialist state.

Dr. Lamont and his first wife Margaret Irish, a fellow socialist activist, made their first trip to the Soviet Union in 1932 (he was thirty) to see first-hand the greatest progressive social experiment in history, and found that the economy was working and that socialism was bringing rapid recovery from the former backwardness, the devastation of World War I, and the civil war and famine that followed. He saw for himself that “the Soviet government was firmly in the saddle,” a fact not acknowledged by his own government, which still refused to recognize the existence of the world’s first anti-capitalist nation. He returned and became chairman of the Friends of the Soviet Union to advocate recognition and improved relations. He also wrote a book, *Russia Day By Day*, published in 1933; the new President, Franklin Roosevelt, did recognize the U.S.S.R. that same year.

the long run.

⁵⁰ Corliss Lamont, *The Philosophy of Humanism* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1982), p. 145.

He “continued to speak and write on behalf of American-Soviet cooperation” as long as there was a Soviet Union, writing two more books and teaching courses about the U.S.S.R. at Cornell and Harvard. He especially advocated close relations with the Soviets during World War II; he and his father joined Vice President Henry Wallace in speaking at a huge 1942 Madison Square rally to express support of the unsurpassed Soviet contribution to the war effort against Germany.

Throughout his life he described his position toward Soviet society as “critical sympathy.” His accurate assessments of the Soviet’s success in building a society strong enough to withstand military threats from other nations were misrepresented as being propaganda from a Soviet apologist. He did make the mistake, he later confessed, of being too tolerant of Stalin’s dictatorship and even the “judicial frame-up” of the Moscow Trials in the late ’thirties that decimated the Soviet leadership. He became a frequent critic of the “continuation of a strict political dictatorship and the non-existence of free speech and civil liberties,” and later of the failure to live up to the guarantees of civil rights contained in the Helsinki Agreement of 1975.

He nonetheless pleaded for understanding on the basis that Russia, Asia, and Africa lacked the history of gradually developed democratic institutions and the economic infrastructure that support Western-style democracy. And he continually pointed out that, despite those supports, maintaining democracy in the United States requires that “we still have to fight tooth and nail, day in and day out, for the preservation of our democratic liberties...” Government corruption, official disregard for the law, and subversion of liberties in the name of safeguarding liberty were dangers to democracy that Corliss Lamont experienced first-hand, as powerful interests in his own society attacked him for his entirely legal and essentially gentlemanly quests to make a better world. As long as the United States is so “far from having attained the democratic ideals that our forefathers wrote into the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights... an element of hypocrisy taints our criticisms of the failings of democracy in foreign lands.”

In his lifetime he supported every conceivable cause for disarmament and improved international relations, but in keeping with Jerome Davis’s criterion that

⁵¹ Corliss Lamont, *Yes to Life: Memoirs of Corliss Lamont*, *ibid.*

Award recipients need not be pacifists, Dr. Lamont did advocate military action against fascism, first in defending the Republican government of Spain against Franco, then in supporting the war against the Axis powers. He was nonetheless horrified when his country became the first to use atomic weapons against human beings, calling it “a new low in international morality.”⁵²

His innate “warm feeling” for humanity in the abstract was made concrete by his ceaseless travels, especially his world tour in 1959 with Margaret. The six-month trip, from Europe through India, the Soviet Union, and Asia, followed eight years of confinement within the Americas imposed when the State Department refused to renew his passport on the grounds that his travels “would not be in the best interests of the United States.”

Despite his jaunt through Asia and his wide interests, he was largely unaware of the imperialist war against the peoples of Indochina until 1961, which the U.S. had inherited from the French. By February 1962 he had organized an open letter to President Kennedy that ran as an advertisement in the *NEW YORK TIMES*. It was perhaps the most tragic instance of his fulfilling the role of Cassandra, accurately outlining a disastrous future to leaders condemned by their fates to ignore the warning. He foresaw the growing direct U.S. involvement in Vietnam, the increasing casualties, the official effort to hide the truth from the American people, the extreme waste and ultimate futility of the war effort, the dangers of engaging China and the Soviet Union in a war by proxy, and the subversion of international law and the nation’s ideals. Tellingly, he quoted a speech by then-Senator Kennedy that made precisely the same arguments on the floor of the Senate in 1954, in which Kennedy himself declared disbelief that any amount of U.S. military assistance could “conquer an enemy which is everywhere and at the same nowhere, ‘an enemy of the people’ which has the sympathy and covert support of the people.”

⁵² General Eisenhower, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and other U.S. military leaders joined Dr. Lamont in his opposition to the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As he noted in *Yes to Life*, Secretary of War Stimson recorded in his diary that Eisenhower had told him, “First, the Japanese were ready to surrender and it wasn’t necessary to hit them with that awful thing. Second, I hated to see our country be the first to use such a weapon...”

From Kennedy to Johnson to Nixon, he kept the open letters coming, publishing seven more that were co-signed by hundreds of national names from all fields, along with two to Harvard classmate Henry Cabot Lodge, U.S. ambassador to Vietnam under Kennedy and Johnson (whom he addressed familiarly as Cabot). In one of the latter, published in the November 1, 1965 NEW YORK TIMES, he addressed the concern that a withdrawal would help the Communist cause: "Of course... [because] the self-interest of every nation is served by peace. [Withdrawal would equally be] pro-American and pro-humanity. It is a position shared in general by millions of American teachers, students, writers, clergymen and workers, as well as such eminent individuals as President de Gaulle, Senator Gruening, Senator Morse [GPA '70], Professor Linus C. Pauling [GPA '62], Bertrand Russell, and Arnold Toynbee."

Along with the letters, the publication of which he funded, Dr. Lamont spoke countless times and wrote hundreds of articles and private letters against U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. His abhorrence of that involvement redoubled when he learned of the criminal secret bombing war in Cambodia, coordinated by the C.I.A., which decimated the countryside and cost the lives of millions of Cambodians. Like Jerome Davis, he believed that what his nation did to Indochina "represented the most evil series of events in the history of U.S. foreign policy. Some of our government leaders in those years rivaled the fascist dictators in their unscrupulous, cruel, and inhuman actions. And I feel fully justified in calling them war criminals."⁵³

After the war he led an effort to counter a government-initiated propaganda campaign to smear the newly unified nation of Vietnam as a cesspool of human rights abuses. (Daniel Ellsberg, GPA '76, was somehow induced to sign on, along with Joan Baez and other prominent anti-war figures.) He prepared an open letter in 1977 and purchased space to run it in several national newspapers, presenting an effective rebuttal to the charges against the new nation, and enlisted the signatures of numerous progressives, including P.E.P.'s Howard Frazier.

Except during World War II, Dr. Lamont's commitments to peace and justice kept him continually in opposition to U.S. foreign policy, which he saw as the major source of threats to world peace in the post-war era. A tireless patriot and a man who took

immense pleasure in his affiliation with great and honorable institutions, he deeply resented being denied that pleasure when it came to his own country. As he wrote, with some bitterness, in the year before he received the Award:

When we add to the Vietnam-Cambodian invasions the 1945 atom bomb massacre of more than two hundred thousand civilians at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the 1961 American-backed attempt to overthrow the Castro Government of Cuba through force of arms, and the initiation of the nuclear arms race, the actions of the United States Government—not the people—caused it to stand out as those of a ruthless and mindless giant in the annals of that era.

Lamont the Civil Libertarian

Dr. Lamont's long service in the cause of American civil liberties sprang from both abstract and personal motivations. His innate sense of fair play, his active sympathy for the victims of society, and his simple reliance on reason caused him to assume that the principles and guarantees in the founding documents of the nation should be strictly construed and enforced to assure equal rights to all citizens, in the face of assaults by the majority and the powerful. The opposition and harassment he himself incurred as a humanist and peace activist gave him first-hand experience of what it meant to be a frequent target of those same assaults.

He was a target for three reasons. He attacked, persistently and articulately, the "superstitious" and "irrational" religious beliefs revered by the vast majority of his countrymen; he vociferously opposed the venality and villainy of his nation in its conduct of foreign affairs; and he consistently sympathized with causes and governments whose goals included overthrowing the economic system on which the rich and powerful depended. Consequently at any given time there were a host of authorities looking for reasons why Corliss Lamont should not be free to espouse his views and further his causes, and ways to stop him from doing so.

The year after his struggle to air progressive opinions at Harvard, he was galvanized by the Scopes trial in Tennessee, with its pyrrhic victory of irrationality and thought control over the freedom to teach the theory of naturalistic evolution. A few years later he became sufficiently moved by Margaret Sanger's efforts to teach about

⁵³ Any quotations by Dr. Lamont not otherwise cited are from *Yes to Life*, *ibid.*

family planning to contribute funds to her American Birth Control League. He became active in the American Civil Liberties Union (A.C.L.U.) and in 1932, at the age of thirty, was elected to its board of directors.

That same year his own civil liberties were first infringed, when U.S. Customs seized some posters he had brought back from his trip to the Soviet Union. An A.C.L.U. committee quickly secured the release of all but three posters, which made fun of capitalism. According to a newspaper account at the time, "After spending two months translating the Russian inscriptions" of the posters, most of which were art reproductions and public health reminders, "Treasury agents have released all but three, which are now held on the charge that they *violate the laws against counterfeiting United States currency.*" [emphasis in original] The three featured tiny, vague representations of U.S. money in unrecognizable denominations, obviously a ruse. It was the first of many efforts by the U.S. government to keep Dr. Lamont from exercising his freedom to travel and share his findings with the American people.⁵⁴

Two years later, he was arrested and jailed for a few hours in Jersey City as part of an A.C.L.U. test case to establish the right to picket peacefully in support of a strike. He recalls, "Though my picketing episode was a distinctly minor occurrence, the experience of being in jail for even a short time was psychologically disturbing," an experience he avoided thereafter. (His fellow board member Norman Thomas, GPA '67, was also jailed in New Jersey in connection with an A.C.L.U. effort.)

His advocacy of closer U.S.-Soviet relations was the motivation for countless attacks on him by the defenders of capitalism. He was often Red-baited as a class traitor, a "silk-shirt communist... whose palms have never known the corns and bunions of hard toil... The sight of a lounge lizard with his pants full of spending cash and a vault full of capitalist bonds, knocking what the boys call 'his own racket,' smacks of hypocrisy."⁵⁵ The same year as that attack, 1932, no less than "the greatest magazine that ever was" (as *THE NEW YORKER* has called itself) smeared him and his family in an

⁵⁴ U.S. citizens' freedom to travel is still not secured. Most Americans traveling to Cuba find it necessary to do so via a third country, in violation of U.S. law, and all travel to several countries, such as Libya, is forbidden to Americans. U.S. law restricts the freedom of its citizens to travel *far* more than any other Western democracy.

⁵⁵ Austen Lake in the *BOSTON AMERICAN*, April 9, 1935.

article titled “Vagrant Lamonts,” alleging that “Corliss himself is a Communist and expects to see The Day” [of ultimate triumph over capitalism], even though he had “never uttered a word in private or public favoring communism, and had always advocated democratic Socialism democratically achieved.” No matter—either system meant the end of private ownership of the means of production, so what was the difference? The baseless NEW YORKER smear gave his critics the “evidence” they needed, and from then on he had to issue continual denials that he was not then, and never had been, a Communist or even a “fellow traveler”. His basic point was that he was too independent-minded to follow any party line or surrender his autonomy to any monolithic party. His book, *The Independent Mind* (1951), endeavored to demonstrate that “men’s minds should be free from control by any authority whatsoever—parental, religious, political, or educational.”⁵⁶ Though he ran for the Senate on the American Labor Party ticket in 1952 (and received ten thousand votes), and again in 1958 (increasing the tally to forty-nine thousand votes), he flatly allowed in 1980, “It is inconceivable that as a scholar, writer, and teacher I would ever lend my mind to the dictates of any political organization.”

During the 1940s the vituperative Westbrook Pegler, columnist for the Hearst chain, labeled him an outright communist, “the voluptuous paradox of Wall Street and Union Square.” (Pegler, possibly the most widely-read columnist of his time, also wrote that Corliss’s father should beat his wife to cure her of rebellious opinions, as F.D.R. should have administered “a punch in the snoot” to Eleanor. He also suggested, with tongue only a bit in cheek, that Corliss should be hanged.)

Years of similar struggles and work for the A.C.L.U. and for Soviet-American friendship drew the ire of none other than J. Edgar Hoover himself, who in 1944 ordered a full investigation of Dr. Lamont—an investigation that continued for thirty years. An immediate fruit of Hoover’s interest was his being subpoenaed to appear before the infamous House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) in 1946 to testify as Chairman of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship.⁵⁷ As usu-

⁵⁶ [Could he actually have thought that his enemies would take comfort from this position vis-à-vis authority?]

⁵⁷ The author was similarly subpoenaed by the successor to this committee, the House Internal Security Committee, in 1972, in connection with its efforts to harass Americans sympathetic

al, the subpoena demanded the production of all conceivable records and names since the organization's founding, an obvious violation of the First Amendment and a way for the Committee to spread its net of ideological inquisition. With the backing of his board, he refused to produce the materials and was cited for contempt. Though the charges against him were later dropped, his executive director, as actual custodian of the records, did serve three months in prison after the Supreme Court refused to hear the case, joined behind bars by others who resisted the Congressional assault on their civil rights, such as the famous "Hollywood Ten" (Dalton Trumbo, Ring Lardner, Jr., and eight other writers and directors). Of them Dr. Lamont wrote:

[They] all deserve the gratitude of civil libertarians for their principled action in challenging the "Un-American Committee" on constitutional grounds. Although they did not achieve their ends, they set a splendid example and helped to educate the American public and the courts as to the true meaning of the Bill of Rights.

Dr. Lamont was among the many who initially tried to laugh off the ideological offensive against the left, recalling the anonymous couplet "Breathes there a man with soul so dead / That he was never called a Red!" But as the post-war era led into the Cold War, the Red-baiting pitch rose to the point where it began interfering with his writing and personal appearances. In 1951 he was effectively confined to within the Americas when the State Department refused to renew his passport because of his "subversive" activities, a confinement that lasted eight years until a similar denial was reversed by the Supreme Court. He finally issued a pamphlet in 1952 of fifty-three reasons "Why I Am Not A Communist," which at one time would have been regarded as a capitulation to the forces of suppression, but in the building hysteria was largely ignored.⁵⁸ In 1953 some of his books about the U.S.S.R. were burned in the street by a mob that had set upon a meeting of the American-Soviet Friendship Council's Chicago chapter, smashing the furniture and violently disrupting the gathering.

The McCarthyite Subcommittee on Permanent Investigations (a strange term!) was the source of the next round of harassment. The basis for its subpoena in 1953 was

to the Cuban Revolution. The subpoena was quashed through the efforts of the Center for Constitutional Rights, and the committee was abolished three years later.

⁵⁸ Along with finding fault with the principles of Dialectical Materialism, he thought the theo-

that Dr. Lamont's 1946 study of Soviet policies toward its nationalities, *The Peoples of the Soviet Union*, had been cited, without his knowledge, as a reference in the bibliography of a U.S. Army manual entitled "Psychological and Cultural Traits of Soviet Siberia". In the Committee's dim reckoning, demonstrating that he was a Communist would support their effort to prove that the Army was being infiltrated and indoctrinated by Communists. In his testimony he made the obligatory disclaimer about never having been a Communist, but refused to answer questions on the grounds that the Subcommittee had no jurisdiction or authority to inquire into the political and religious beliefs of private citizens. He was cited again for contempt, indicted in 1954, arrested, and released on two thousand dollars bail; he battled the charge for two years, without A.C.L.U. assistance, before a U.S. Appeals Court issued a decision in his favor.

Though he was never directly targeted by Congress's third inquisitional agency, the Senate Internal Security Committee, he saw the purpose of all three as the same: to conduct "frenzied campaigns" intended "to foment an atmosphere of suspicion and tension that helped to build public support for the Cold War of the United States Government against the Soviet Union."

[They] rampaged rough-shod over the Bill of Rights by asking unconstitutional questions about political beliefs, associational activities, and personal or private matters. They attempted to destroy careers and reputations through public smears and innuendoes, and through the abhorrent doctrines of guilt by association... Many teachers and government employees were summarily dismissed, either because of unproved accusations which placed them under a cloud of suspicion or because, standing on the Fifth Amendment, they refused to answer questions calculated to make them witnesses against themselves.

In 1956 he missed a Canadian television interview when the F.B.I. arranged to have him turned back as a "subversive" at the U.S.-Canadian border.

In 1963 Congress enacted a law that required the Post Office to screen all non-first class mail coming into the United States for Communist propaganda. Upon finding such an item the addressee was sent an officious notice indicating that in order to receive the mail the addressee would have to write back and request it. Anyone who did

ry's name was "awkward".

so was sent their mail, but their name was also secretly forwarded HUAC and often one or more intelligence agencies. The assumption that such reporting would occur was sufficient to chill the flow of ideas from Communist countries; those brave souls who did demand their mail effectively incriminated themselves and were listed for possible subpoena and harassment by the Committee. It was a clear assault on the First Amendment, and possibly the Fifth as well. Numerous progressives (including the P.E.P. office) began receiving such notices about unsolicited copies of *Peking Review*. Unlike most, Dr. Lamont immediately sued the Postmaster General for acting as a censor. The case got to the Supreme Court in 1965, with the brilliant Leonard Boudin arguing for Dr. Lamont against the “weak and wobbly” Solicitor General, Archibald Cox.⁵⁹ The Court decided 8-0 for Dr. Lamont, in a decision written by William O. Douglas that struck down the law—the first time the Court had ever declared a law unconstitutional for violating the First Amendment.

A full compendium of other outrages perpetrated on this idealistic man entirely because of his political views and associations would comprise hundreds of items. Items: surveillance and harassment by twenty-seven different F.B.I. agents over the years; constant questioning of his friends, associates, bankers, doormen, household staff, and even his tennis partners; the recruitment of the head of his parents’ staff in Maine to spy on the family and report on his summer vacation activities and associations; the monitoring and transcription of his telephone conversations; the monthly review of his telephone bills and bank statements, including the photocopying of all checks; the inclusion of his and his wife’s names on Nixon’s “Enemies List” and on the list of Americans to be taken to concentration camps in the event of a “national political emergency”; the pressuring of media outlets to ban him from their air waves and pages (largely successful); persistent efforts to smoke out some evidence to support a grand jury indictment of criminal perjury (completely unsuccessful)... The list goes on, capped by the opening of over a hundred items of his personal correspondence by the C.I.A., including two affectionate missives to his beloved Helen; for that final affront

⁵⁹ Dr. Lamont’s appellation; possibly he seemed that way because his heart was not in it. He was later to become Special Prosecutor in the Watergate investigation, only to be fired by President Nixon for failing to investigate in a way pleasing to the investigation’s ultimate target, also President Nixon. Like Lamont, Cox was a Harvard man.

he sued and won again, this time receiving symbolic damages in the amount of two thousand dollars while establishing a new victory for the right of privacy.

The deplorable enterprise continued for three decades, disrupting his personal and professional relationships, making a mockery of the Bill of Rights, generating nothing but a file of 2,788 pages⁶⁰—all because his political views and affiliations showed some sympathy (but also harsh criticism) of the Soviet system, and because he dared to question, articulately and unceasingly, the private ownership of capital and the manifold civil sins he associated with it. Whereas other civil libertarians supported their cause by contributing to the defense of others, he fought his own battles in the war between the police state and democracy.

The most painful losses to him in that war came from what he considered the corruption of the nation's main guardian of civil liberties—the A.C.L.U. itself. Dr. Lamont had been an active member of its board since 1932, along with nine other prominent civil libertarians. Among them were two other Award winners, the Rev. John Haynes Holmes [GPA '61] and Norman Thomas [GPA '67], both of whom had helped found the organization in 1920. But the board had several staunch anti-communists, Mr. Thomas among them, and others were susceptible to the anti-communist tide that swept over the nation on the eve of World War II. As discussed in the chapter about him, Norman Thomas believed that the unprincipled methods of the Communists could bring down the very organizations determined to protect them. Rev. Holmes, yet another Harvard man, saw Communists as a threat to the liberal religious values that were a society's best foundation, and consequently agreed that within the A.C.L.U. they could be a threat to civil liberties. Others, such as founder and executive director Roger Baldwin, were simply fearful that the organization would be painted with the red brush and then destroyed if it did not purge itself of any Communist taint. One board member, Morris Ernst, was four-square for the general witch hunt, secretly passed information about the A.C.L.U.'s internal affairs to the F.B.I., and in fact later served J. Edgar Hoover openly as his personal attorney. Ernst and

⁶⁰ As of 1975 when the records were produced under the Freedom of Information Act. Dr. Lamont assumed that the surveillance continued “‘til death do us part.”

Thomas formed an anti-communist alliance that had a profound effect on the organization.

During his first seven years on the A.C.L.U. board, Dr. Lamont found the meetings “among the most stimulating experiences of my life,” as the merits and significance of cases were discussed. He recalled that the meetings became increasingly acrimonious, as “a small minority led by Morris Ernst and Norman Thomas pressed the board to abandon its traditional policy of confining itself to the American Bill of Rights and to take a stand against anti-democratic governments abroad, especially those of the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany... [and] to limit the rights of Communists in the United States.”

The board rejected those modifications of its principles at first, but a confluence of two events in the fall of 1939 turned the tide. Fulfilling Roger Baldwin's dark fears, HUAC branded the A.C.L.U. as a Communist front and called for its investigation. Ernst and another board member met with the head of the Committee, who told them that the best strategy for clearing their collective name was to become an extension of the crusade to expose and destroy Communist influence. The other event was the signing of the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact, which along with the Soviet invasion of Finland a month later released a great tide of anti-Soviet and anti-communist sentiment in the United States.

Mr. Thomas publicly called for the expulsion of Communists and “fellow-travelers” from the A.C.L.U. board, and in 1940 a resolution was passed that made that position A.C.L.U. policy, over Dr. Lamont's most strenuous objections.⁶¹ In his view, “the move gained ‘respectability’ for the organization in influential business and political circles,” notably the members of HUAC. “Among civil libertarians in general, however... the resolution aroused intense opposition. One open letter from seventeen

⁶¹ Dr. Lamont considered Thomas “a non-hero” who “betrayed the cause of civil liberties again and again” and was “perhaps the most egotistical man I ever encountered, always loudly shouting down his opponents in a discussion.” In 1954 he wrote: “Mr. Thomas for many years has been one of the most vociferous of those politicians who try to excite the public to white heat over the alleged Communist menace. In spite of his genuine services to civil liberties, he bears much responsibility for the general witch hunt both within and without the Federal Government; and so has helped to create the atmosphere in which the purge engulfs Socialists and liberals as well as Communists. I repeat that civil liberties are indivisible.” [in W.A. Swanberg, *Norman Thomas*]

prominent liberals stated, “Never before has it been necessary to mobilize public sentiment in order to defend civil liberties within the Civil Liberties Union.”

Dr. Lamont and others pointed out that the A.C.L.U. would now be forced to “pass judgment on foreign governments and on the twists and turns of foreign politics,” and would have to practice the same process of guilt by association it had always previously opposed. The resolution set an example that “less liberal organizations [were] not slow to imitate,” setting up an anti-communist loyalty oath for the A.C.L.U. “of the sort [the organization] had long opposed, and establishing a “standard formula for the factional splitting of organizations over the Communist issue.” Worst of all, in Dr. Lamont’s view, it was the hallmark of a weakened A.C.L.U. that failed to resolutely resist the incursions of the McCarthy era and even “boasted of its close and friendly relations with the F.B.I. and “refused at any time to denounce the compilation and use of the U.S. Attorney General’s list of subversive organizations.” He saw it as “a major turning point in the retrogression of civil liberties in America” that prevailed over the next twenty-five years.

The resolution was turned first against Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, the only woman among the founders of the organization, who had joined the Communist Party in 1936. The initial vote was a tie, broken by Rev. Holmes as chairman of the board. Dr. Lamont commented, “He did not have to vote, but had the legal right to do so and vent his anti-communist spleen on Elizabeth Flynn.” He compared it to role of the presiding bishop in the trial of Joan of Arc, and counted “the six hours of that meeting as one of the most severe ordeals I have ever experienced.” In fact, the experience had a shattering effect on him. Whereas he had been fond of “saying that I considered every individual my friend until he proved to be my enemy,” and had joined the A.C.L.U. board “in the belief that I would be working with a group of idealists dedicated to the cause” of upholding the ideals of American democracy, he now faced the reality that “a majority of those individuals whom I had so admired compromised their civil liberties principles and utilized unscrupulous tactics...” He was thoroughly disillusioned, humiliated by his own naïveté, and determined that, “in the debased world of politics” at least, “I had to be continually on my guard.”

He held on, increasingly isolated, until 1953, when a number of board members (Norman Thomas prominent among them) threatened to resign if he was re-nominated for another term. The majority acceded to their threat, ending Corliss Lamont's more than twenty years' association with the A.C.L.U.

He immediately joined the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee (N.E.C.L.C.), which had been set up in 1951 by a retired Wall Street banker and others who were alarmed by the nation's turn toward the right and doubtful that the weakened A.C.L.U. was an adequate response to the resulting attacks on civil liberties. The organization honored him in 1953 and again in 1954 for his courage in using the First Amendment as his defense against HUAC. Dr. Lamont devoted increasing amounts of his considerable civil liberties resources to it and in 1963 was elected its chairman. Its general counsel was Leonard Boudin, Dr. Lamont's personal attorney for many of his own civil liberties cases, who also defended Willard Uphaus [GPA '70] in 1954-55.⁶² It was the source of his victory in the censorship suit he brought against the Postal Service.

Years later Dr. Lamont developed the transcript of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn's trial into a book and circulated it to A.C.L.U. board members with a plea that they rescind her expulsion posthumously. (She died in 1964.) He won a moral victory in 1976 when, thirty-six years after the purge, the A.C.L.U. did vote decisively to rescind.

The following year The NEW YORK TIMES broke the story that A.C.L.U. officials had reported regularly and secretly to the F.B.I. about its activities and members, with the focus on those with Communist connections, and even passed confidential documents to the Bureau. The A.C.L.U.'s director had conferred personally with J. Edgar Hoover about Corliss Lamont, and had enlisted the Bureau's nefarious assistance in his efforts to keep Communists off the boards of the organization's local chapters.

⁶² The N.E.C.L.C.'s connection with P.E.P. was strong. P.E.P. founding Board member Rabbi Robert Goldberg was on its executive committee. Thomas Emerson, the renowned constitutional law professor and P.E.P.'s treasurer, was a founder of the N.E.C.L.C. and served on its National Council along with Benjamin Spock, GPA '68, and Edward Lamb, Ohio businessman, Humanist, and P.E.P. supporter. Named among its stalwart contributors were P.E.P. major donor Edward Aberlin and Executive Director Howard Frazier. Dr. Spock and Daniel Ellsberg [GPA '76] were also recipients of the N.E.C.L.C.'s Tom Paine Award.

In addition to clearing Ms. Flynn, after the NEW YORK TIMES story, the A.C.L.U. board repudiated its ties to the F.B.I. as “wrong, inexcusable, and destructive of civil liberties principles.” To Dr. Lamont, the entire matter demonstrated how challenging it can be to hold out against the continual tide, always ebbing and flowing, against the Bill of Rights. “All true libertarians,” he wrote, “in light of the A.C.L.U.-F.B.I. revelations, need to remain alert to see that such a disaster never happens again.”

Lamont the Compleat Progressive

From his early adulthood Corliss Lamont was a prominent figure among the “peace and justice elite” based in New York, engaged in cause after cause with the same circle of notable progressive activists.⁶³ Yet he was more than Humanist philosopher, Democratic Socialist, and Civil Libertarian. His academic activities continued through most of his life: along with teaching and lecturing at Columbia, Harvard, Cornell, and the New School for Social Research., he established significant literary research collections at Columbia, school for the writings by George Santayana and Masefield and for art by Rockwell Kent. He wrote poetry and literary criticism, portraits of the British poet laureate John Masefield, Bertrand Russell, and John Dewey, and countless pamphlets, articles, and open letters on the issues of the day, such as the trial of the Rosenbergs and opposition to U.S. hostility toward the Cuban Revolution. He was an sportsman: skier, tennis player, hiker of America’s national parks. He was a cinema aficionado, counting among his friends Katharine Hepburn and other Hollywood notables. And he was a model son, husband, and father of three daughters and a son, grandfather of six, great-grandfather of one, step-father of fourteen and step-grandfather to fifty by his last two marriages.

It is a testament to the power of money in our world that, despite his myriad activities and achievements, many thought of him first as a source of funds for their causes.

⁶³ In 1979 he was nominated for the Presidential Medal of Freedom by Dr. George Koski, the executive director of the Madison (Wis.) Area Community of Churches for being “the moral and intellectual leader of that saving remnant in many tense moments” during the dark years of the McCarthy period, and one “who recognized the stupidity of the Cold war at its outset, prophesied against it, came to see the restoration of a measure of sanity in American-Soviet relations, and all the while never wavered in his fidelity to the Bill of Rights...” President Carter, in the midst of demonizing the Soviets and cranking up the Cold War for its final run, did not agree with Dr. Koski.

As other scions of the rich might invest their inheritances in stocks or commercial enterprises, Corliss Lamont invested his in forwarding his progressive life goals. He made regular contributions of one to a few thousand dollars to a host of groups he believed; P.E.P. was one such recipient. He also gave millions to institutions close to him, such as Columbia and Phillips Exeter, for scholarships, endowed chairs, and research facilities. His largest single gift was one million dollars to establish a professorship in civil liberties at Columbia Law School in 1982. He also funded scholarships and fellowships, including an endowed fellowship at Columbia in Economic Conversion, and numerous "traveling fellowships" (as he preferred to call them) for those in need of funds to participate in P.E.P. delegations to the Soviet Union and elsewhere. (Dr. Lamont funded two trips to the Soviet Union for P.E.P. Board member Marta Daniels in 1977 and 1979 to enable her to speak first-hand about Soviet society amidst the rising Cold War tensions.)

He used his wealth to give himself the time most progressive intellectuals only wish they could devote to their causes. And he could do more than most with that time: if he appreciated a speaker or crusader or artist, he could simply arrange a tour to expose the favored one to a wider public, or author a book about him, or sponsor a symposium, employing his own funds and his own equally considerable literary and organizational talents.⁶⁴ He propelled causes he believed in with dollops of money in the same way that he caught gusts of wind to propel his sailboat on the bay in Maine. He paid the expenses for all manner of concerts and other events at his Ossining, New York home to support worthy causes, including annual picnics often attended by Howard Frazier, at which Pete Seeger would lead all in song.

He did not give away so much during his lifetime that he invaded his capital, which would have deprived him of the power to continue giving, and he always kept enough to support a very comfortable life free of the common man's material con-

⁶⁴ For example, Dr. Lamont contributed significant funding to the Congreso Internacional sobre Jorge Santayana, a conference solely dedicated to Santayana studies held in conjunction with the Spanish 1992 Columbus celebrations, convened in Avila, Spain, which included forty-five papers from scholars throughout the world and was attended by over one hundred fifty persons. He also supported the publication of *The Works of George Santayana* [The MIT Press, Cambridge Mass] along with co-sponsors The National Endowment for the Humanities, Emil Ogden, and the Comité Conjunto Hispano-Norteamericano para la Coop-

cerns. After his death, as during his life, his progressive commitments continued to be general rather focused on a single point. He willed the bulk of what he left behind in small grants “to the most important committees and causes that I have aided during my lifetime.” (P.E.P., for example, received five thousand dollars.) He also established a foundation to forward his spectrum of primary interests: civil liberties, socialism, humanism, environmentalism, the abolition of nuclear weapons, and the attainment of international peace.

The 1981 Award Ceremony

On the morning of the Award ceremony, Thursday November 12th, a telegram was received from Edward Lamb in Toledo, Ohio:

ALL HUMANITY SALUTES DR. CORLISS LAMONT ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RECEIPT OF THE GANDHI PEACE AWARD. WE ARE PROUD INDEED THAT HE HAS LED US INTO A PEACEFUL MORE RATIONAL WORLD.

There was no Board dinner before the presentation; instead Dr. Lamont had dinner with the Fraziers at the P.E.P. cottage in Milford and stayed with them for the night. The Award was presented to him that evening at the Center Church on the Green in New Haven; admission was free. Howard procured a batch of Dr. Lamont’s books on consignment from the publisher, Horizon Books, most of which were sold during the event.

Board member Lou Zemel was master of ceremonies, and several songs were performed by New Haven singer-songwriter-playwright Ginny Bales. The actual presentation was made by Roland Bainton, P.E.P.’s president, after an introduction by Board member and A.F.S.C. field secretary Marta Daniels. She hailed Dr. Lamont as a man “of tremendous spirit, dedication, and hope” and called him “one of the most interesting and important figures of our time” and “the foremost exponent of civil liberties.” She told the story of his encounter with McCarthyism in the ’fifties, as presented in his book, *Freedom Is As Freedom Does*. She recounted his Supreme Court victory over political censorship of the mails and brought things up to date by mentioning his current struggle to expose the tactics and strategy of the Moral Majority.

Ms. Daniels explained to the audience of over one hundred the essence of Humanism, connecting it to the concern about nuclear war then dominating the news: “The philosophy of Humanism is antithetical to the present global policy of security based on the threat to murder millions of people [and] to nuclear weapons as a means to security.” Because the humanist has no divine salvation to hope for, “the struggle for peace and disarmament is central to the Humanist world. In a democracy, says Humanism, we are all responsible for pushing the button.” She praised Dr. Lamont for his unequalled efforts to improve U.S.-Soviet relations, and for using “his own personal means generously in diminishing hatred between our two countries.”

Ms. Daniels recalled to those assembled that it was Corliss who launched her own career in “debunking the Soviet Threat” but making it possible for her “to make two fact-finding tours to the U.S.S.R.” which enabled her to be a much more knowledgeable and effective peace worker. She cited his financial aid to P.E.P. in support of its tours to the Soviet Union and remarking, “There probably isn’t a single national peace group in the nation that Corliss has not lent a helping hand to.” She praised him most of all for helping peace activists to keep their hope alive in the face of the bleak times that prevailed. She closed with a tongue-in-cheek list similar to the one she had presented the previous year in her introduction to Helen Caldicott, which called for President Reagan to wind up in a Cuban geriatric hospital, for Secretary of State Alexander Haig to “undergo a frontal lobotomy on his jutting jaw to prevent further macho posturing,” and for Jerry Falwell to have a breakdown when he can’t comprehend why the A.C.L.U. would defend his right to Red-bait them as a Communist front, among other things—her “road map to implement Peace, Justice, and Love on the Planet.”

Dr. Bainton gave a brief presentation message as president of P.E.P. (It would be his final appearance at the Awards; he died three years later.) Dr. Lamont gave a stirring speech focused on the rising nuclear danger. He called for Reagan to fire Haig and asserted that “the great danger to the U.S. is not threat from the Soviet Union, but from Washington”—specifically “officials in the Pentagon and the C.I.A. ... Our foreign policy is fast getting out of control. Washington has become an asylum for politi-

cal maniacs.” He called on the audience to follow his example of persistence in the struggle for peace and civil liberties.

Leon Wilson of Yonkers had again calligraphed and framed the Award certificate, for which Howard Frazier wrote the inscription:

*In appreciation for your boldness, courage, and enduring commitment
to the causes of civil liberties, human rights, and world peace.
Through your concern and dedication for upholding human dignity
in all aspects of life, through your extensive writings, court actions,
and leadership in the fields of philosophy, humanism, and civil rights,
you have demonstrated the highest traditions of mankind in your
efforts to help all people to achieve a full and meaningful life.*

Roland H. Bainton, President

After the Award

“I never want to retire,” he said in the year he received the Award, at the age of seventy-nine. “I want to emulate Bertrand Russell, who died at age ninety-seven and was functioning in public affairs up until his last day.” He worked, traveled, played, and wrote for another fourteen years. He married his third wife, the much younger Beth Keehner, 1986. He initiated his last great civil liberties battle in 1988 at the age of eighty-six, when he sued to end the granting of Federal aid to religious-oriented schools outside the United States. (An indication of reconciliation was that the suit was sponsored by the A.C.L.U.) Though the Bush administration claimed that the funds were foreign aid, and thus exempt from the Constitutional separation of church and state, the Circuit Court agreed with Dr. Lamont in 1991 and the aid was ended.

In one of his last trips, he traveled to Cuba with Beth in 1993 and met with Fidel Castro, who expressed the country’s appreciation for all he had done over the years to oppose the U.S. economic blockade against the island nation. The two also discussed the possibilities of mounting a suit against the Federal government for instigating multiple assassination attempts against the Cuban leader. Dr. Lamont left Castro with a symbolic gift of five thousand dollars to be used for humanitarian relief of the suffering caused the Cuban people by his nation’s callous policies.

He died peacefully at his estate in Ossining on the Hudson on April 26, 1995, at the age of ninety-three, having missed the mark set by Russell by just four years. At his

memorial service on May 19th, Beth read a letter she had received a few days prior from President Bill Clinton, who had met Corliss in 1992 and knew something of his accomplishments. The letter ended with this tribute:

Corliss gave a great deal to our country during his long, rich life. As a tireless advocate for America's civil liberties, he challenged our nation to honor its most basic covenant with its citizens. The many struggles he fought throughout his career have helped to preserve our precious freedoms for the generations to come.

"My final word," he wrote in the year he received the Award, "is that in the battle that confronts us today for America's freedom and welfare, our chief aim as public-spirited citizens must be neither to avoid trouble, nor to stay out of jail, nor even to preserve our lives, but to keep on fighting for our fundamental principles and ideals."

Chapter Eighteen

1982: The Dream At Hand—Randall Watson Forsberg

*Last night I had the strangest dream I ever dreamed before,
I dreamed the world had all agreed to put an end to war. ...
And the people in the streets below were dancing round and round
While swords and guns and uniforms were scattered on the ground.*

—Ed McCurdy.

In the first year of the Reagan administration, the American peace movement took off—soaring in participation, public attention, and effectiveness in ways “that participants and observers alike find quite miraculous, mysterious, and even enthralling.”⁶⁵ The unprecedented surge unified the normally disparate American peace forces, drew millions of previously apathetic citizens into the peace movement, incited activists to physically assault nuclear submarines and bases,⁶⁶ produced the largest rally ever to take place in the United States up to that time—a million in New York City, in 1981—and had a profound effect on the national elections of 1982. The shock waves that rippled forth for the remainder of the decade had a profound effect on how the nuclear arms race began to come to an end.

It was the perfect test of the old conundrum, Does history make leaders, or do leaders make history. Social and political circumstances coalesced into a crisis just as someone perfectly prepared to address that crisis emerged on the national scene. Her name was Randall Forsberg.

In the spring of 1982 the P.E.P. Board chose from a dozen candidates representing the usual wide range of activities. The first name alphabetically was George Byer, who had obligingly nominated himself for his preliminary efforts to establish an international friendship week. The chaplain of the University of South Florida, Raymond De

⁶⁵ “The Soaring of Social Movements: American Peace Activism, 1981-83” by John Lofland, April 1992 (paper prepared for Harvard seminar)

⁶⁶ As a close-to-home example of such nonviolent “assaults”, on July 4th of 1982 New Haven activist Vincent Kay joined eight others in symbolically attacking the U.S.S. Florida, a Trident submarine at Electric Boat in Groton, taking literally the Biblical injunction to “beat swords into plowshares and study war no more.” The Trident Nein [stet] were tried and

Hainaut was next, for his advocacy of liberation theology. Daniel and Phillip Berrigan were again nominated, as was Board member Ruth Gage Colby. The American Friends Service Committee was again represented, this time by Frances Crowe, the western Massachusetts field secretary. Randall Forsberg was next (see below). The name of Admiral Gene La Rocque, founder of the Center for Defense Information, was again put forward. Lillian Moore, one of the initial organizers of Women Strike for Peace and a prominent Fairfield County activist, was nominated by her husband, Board member Eugene Moore. Scott Nearing, a founding Board member of P.E.P. and a frequent participant on P.E.P. tours, then approaching his hundredth birthday, was nominated once again for his internationally-known “radical simplicity”. George and Helen Willoughby were nominated for their grueling career as Quaker war tax resisters. Next was Raymond Wilson, a Quaker lobbyist for peace in Washington. The final name on the list was the second nomination of Lou Zemel, proprietor of Powder Ridge, one of Connecticut’s major ski resorts, and one of P.E.P.’s most active and creative Board members over the years. He had died the previous December; it would have been the first posthumous award. In the final voting, Randall Forsberg received just a few points more than Scott Nearing, who was just ahead of the Berrigans. Lou Zemel was fourth; a special tribute was spoken in his honor at the Award ceremony.

Randall Forsberg

The conditions that led to the historic 1980-84 surge in the peace movement began decades before, but a good place to begin is the work of Bertrand Russell. He popularized the now-commonplace peace symbol and brought international renown to the “ban the bomb” cause. The nuclear near-miss in 1962, the first test-ban treaty the following year, the mad campaign to put a bomb shelter in every back yard—not to mention Lyndon Johnson’s infamous campaign commercial portraying the atomic bombing of a little girl holding a flower—these and many other stimuli kept the American public in a continual state of suppressed alarm about the imminence of nuclear war. That state was overlaid by the all-consuming effort to stop the Vietnam War, and when the War did end, there was a curious hiatus of general non-thinking about war in general. Jimmy Carter’s profligate promises to rush toward an end of the Cold War

convicted, and five were jailed in Connecticut for nearly a year.

excited the hopes of millions, awakening them once again to thoughts of liberation from the long nuclear nightmare. His decisive turn away from peace, and toward wildly dangerous and costly new strategic weapons systems and new levels of insult to the Soviets, caused a renewed sense of alarm to surface in the public mind. Ronald Reagan's election and his immediate measures to heighten cold war tensions added a sense of emergency. Peace forces began again to coalesce into groups, organizations, and movements. All that was needed, as it turned out, was a new voice with a new idea for galvanizing the energy building up into an effective national campaign.

As Helen Caldicott demonstrated, a recognized expert can speak with a level of authority that compels belief and action from others. But whereas Dr. Caldicott could speak as a physician on the health effects of radiation and the impossibility of responding medically to a nuclear attack, where could a certified nuclear weapons expert be found who could speak with the same authority about practical ways to end the arms race? Such authorities tend to wind up in the employ of the Pentagon or conservative think tanks, where their expertise is harnessed in the cause of justifying new billions for the next generation of death machines.

Prominent among the exceptions was Randall Watson Forsberg. She grew up on the south shore of Long Island, daughter of a t.v. soap opera star and an English teacher.⁶⁷ She did well in Catholic and public schools, won scholarships at the University of Chicago, transferred to Barnard in New York City, and immersed herself in an English major. She became editor of the literary magazine, was graduated in 1965, and began a career, following in her mother's footsteps, as a high school English teacher.

Destiny required her services elsewhere.

In 1967 she met a student of social work from Sweden, Gunnar Forsberg, married him and followed him home to Stockholm. In need of a job, she took a typing spot at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), which the Swedish government had just established to monitor the world's military expenditures and forces. The Vietnam War was escalating, Sweden was accepting American draftees and sol-

⁶⁷ This account follows the biographical overview of Ms. Forsberg in Peter M. Rinaldo, *Trying to Change the World* pp. 91-104

diers deserting to avoid the War, and a rising sense that world peace was becoming dangerously precarious permeated Institute. As she read what she was given to type, she was aghast to find that the military expenditures for the industrialized nations exceeded the combined incomes of the entire developing world. And she was pregnant, and connecting to war in a new way: months before her daughter was born, she posted on her office wall a news photo of a Vietnamese mother carrying her dead child. The seeds were planted.

She gave birth to her first and only child, Katarina (who her thirteen years later would witness her mother's receiving of the Gandhi Peace Award). After returning to work, she graduated from typist to editor and research fellow. One of the first articles she oversaw became a chapter in the Institute's 1970 *Yearbook of World Armaments and Disarmament*. It revealed that the U.S. Defense Department was using inflated estimates of the Soviet Union's military research and development expenditures; the case was so solid that Defense withdrew its figures. She continued writing the *Yearbook* sections on U.S. and Soviet nuclear weapons until 1982, mastering the profession of military research to such an extent that her estimates came to be recognized as the most reliable unclassified figures available, as indicated by the fact that in 1981 they were the foundation of the *United Nations Report on Nuclear Weapons*.

In 1974 she was divorced and returned to the United States with Katarina. She became a graduate student in political science at M.I.T. in its highly related program on defense policy and arms control. She joined a circle of anti-war academics called the Boston Study Group and helped them produce *The Price of Defense*, which documented the social costs of the nation's ever-increasing military budget and made the case for dramatic reductions in U.S. weapons stockpiles. Her classmates were little help; the others were slated to become analysts for various military agencies.

The Boston Study Group discussions and her own work convinced her of two propositions, both of which were momentous. The first was the astounding conclusion:

No part of American military forces has anything to do with the defense of this country, literally defined. The conventional forces are all for use overseas. The

nuclear forces, though serving for deterrence, could only be used for revenge.⁶⁸

The statement would have been interesting coming from a peace activist; coming from a world authority on the subject, it was astounding—one of those statements that one has never thought of, yet which is obvious as soon as one hears it. It implied that the very name of the Defense Department was an Orwellian distortion; that the United States had embarked on a mission of world dominance that had nothing to do with its supposedly peace-loving role in the world; and that its nuclear strategy, in being a strategy for revenge, was immoral.

Further, her conclusion was that the primary function of U.S. nuclear forces was to restrain adversaries from using their conventional forces to check the conventional forces of the U.S., for fear of initiating an escalation toward nuclear war. To maintain and enhance that threat, the U.S. had to make credible the fear that conventional warfare could easily escalate into a nuclear confrontation; hence the development of tactical nukes to be put under the control of battlefield commanders, the placement of cruise missiles on the very borders of the Soviet Union, and similar nuclear brinkmanship. These steps not only made the threat more credible; they made the actuality of nuclear war far more likely. The only path to a stable peace was a “build-down” of the military establishments of both sides to purely defensive roles.

Her other proposition emerged from her consideration with others in the Boston Study Group of how such a reversal of military policy could be achieved, given scale and momentum of the U.S.-Soviet military juggernaut and the scattered priorities of the national peace movement. In 1979 she put together a paper titled “Confining the Military to Defense as a Route to Disarmament” which included the strategy of focusing pro-disarmament forces around a series of single-issue campaigns. She pushed the idea of uniting behind a common theme in discussions with various peace group leaders while completing her Ph.D. course work at M.I.T.

Rather than following the route of her classmates into the military-academic complex, she determined that the way to preserve her independent voice was to establish

⁶⁸ Rinaldo, *ibid.* Contrast this revenge-based policy—the core of the U.S.-U.S.S.R. strategic strategy with the words of Mohandas K. Gandhi, carved into the Gandhi Peace Award sculpture: “Love Ever Suffers / Never Revenges Itself”.

her own version of the Stockholm Institute. As the 1980 Presidential campaign was taking shape, she opened the doors of her Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies (I.D.D.S.) in Cambridge, a stone's throw from M.I.T. and Harvard.

At that point she was ready to suggest a specific theme around which peace forces could organize for the new decade. Her opportunity to be heard came on December 7, 1979, at a national conference organized by the Mobilization for Survival, a coalition of leading peace groups called forth by the American Friends Service Committee (A.F.S.C.), Clergy and Laity Concerned (CALC) and the Fellowship of Reconciliation (F.O.R.).⁶⁹ She brought the conference participants to their feet with a powerful and well-documented address titled simply, "End the Arms Race", proposing a simple plan for first freezing the development and deployment of nuclear weapons, to be followed by a process of arms reduction and destruction. An N.B.C./Associated Press poll showed that the timing was right: the American public favored "a new agreement between the United States and Russia that would limit nuclear weapons" by a margin of two to one.

A perennial quandary in the peace movement is the tension between central control and decentralized participation: the former can be efficient but not sufficiently inclusive; the latter can be democratic but unproductive. Ms. Forsberg initiated a process that blended both. Expanding her conference proposal into a paper titled "Call to Halt the Nuclear Arms Race", she circulated each draft to an ever-widening circle of peace movement leaders and independent arms control experts, incorporating their suggestions in each iteration of the process. By the time the final version was published in April of 1980, it represented a reasonable consensus of those whose support would be required to make it an effective rallying point.

Through her new Institute, she joined A.F.S.C., F.O.R., and CALC in bringing out ten thousand copies of an eleven-by-seventeen-inch sheet, folded in half to make four letter-size pages, with the paper on three pages and a list of sponsors and a space for the stamp of a local organization on the back. It instantly became, along with Tom Paine's "Common Sense", one of the most influential pamphlets in American history.

⁶⁹ CALC was the successor to Clergy and Laity Concerned about Vietnam, founded in a fortnight by the Rev. William Sloane Coffin [GPA '67]. F.O.R. was the primary affiliation of

The pamphlet recited the most minimal facts about where the arms race was heading, with the compelling authority Ms. Forsberg had earned in her five years as a leading strategic weapons expert. It concluded with the simple formula for a mutual, verifiable nuclear weapons freeze she had proposed at the Mobilization for Survival. The Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign was born.

Again successfully balancing control and collectivity, Ms. Forsberg started the National Freeze Clearinghouse under the aegis of her brand-new I.D.D.S., to collect prominent names to be added to the Campaign's endorsers, to coordinate national press relations, and to answer frequently-asked questions to keep the waters clear. She also initiated a hefty publication, the *Freeze Newsletter*. As the number of participating groups grew to exceed three hundred, staff swelled and the clerical work threatened to sink the Institute. In 1981 the Freeze Campaign became a separate organization controlled by a broadly-based national committee that grew to exceed a hundred members, moved to St. Louis to be more centrally located, and took on a full-time executive director to coordinate a dozen paid staff and numerous volunteers.⁷⁰ He commented, "We have nowhere reached the full potential of this movement. It's sort of doubling every couple of months."

A key link in this coordination of central control and grass-roots participation was that everyone stayed with the precise wording of her resolution as set forth in the *Call* pamphlet:

To improve national and international security, the United States and the Soviet Union should stop the nuclear arms race. Specifically, they should adopt a mutual freeze on the testing, production, and deployment of nuclear weapons and of missiles and new aircraft designed primarily to deliver nuclear weapons. This is an essential, verifiable first step toward lessening the risk of nuclear war and reducing the nuclear arsenals.

Around this language more than a thousand separate local and state campaigns were initiated at the grass roots. In the November 1980 elections, a resolution calling for a bilateral freeze on the testing and deployment of nuclear weapons passed in a

A.J. Muste [GPA '66] and a key affiliation for Norman Thomas [GPA '67].

⁷⁰ In one of those frequent but inexplicable name coincidences, the executive director of the Freeze Campaign was also named Randall (last name Kehler).

town meeting in western Massachusetts, igniting the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign. It was the beginning of a snowball that included passage of the Freeze resolution by over seven hundred town governments, twenty state legislative bodies, a dozen state referenda, most national religious denominations, many labor unions, and countless civic groups at the local and regional levels. Supporting those resolutions were petition signatures that eventually numbered between three and four *million*.

Even the President took notice; always the super-hawk, Reagan nonetheless told reporters at his first televised news conference, "My goal is to reduce nuclear weapons dramatically. A nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. So to those who protest against nuclear war, I can only say, I'm with you." He saw a protester in Europe carrying a sign that said "I Am Afraid Of Nuclear Weapons" and called out, "I too am afraid."

In the fall of 1981 Ms. Forsberg took the Campaign to Europe, lecturing to institutes, conferences, and citizen's groups, and on October 10th delivering an address called "The American People Are Against the Arms Race" in German before a rally of four hundred thousand in Bonn. She made her claim with some justification: the N.B.C./AP poll of that month showed that American popular support for an end to the arms race had increased to more than three to one (seventy to twenty-one percent).

Other politicians brought the issue into the halls of Congress. In early 1982 Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts (Ms. Forsberg's home state) joined with Mark Hatfield of Oregon to introduce a Senate resolution that included the Freeze language. A similar resolution was introduced in the House after compelling testimony by Ms. Forsberg before the Subcommittee on International Security and Scientific Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Meanwhile the Freeze Campaign held its second national conference, drawing over four hundred Freeze activists, who learned that the Freeze was now active in all fifty states and a majority of Congressional districts and were urged to keep the Campaign broad-based and non-partisan.

As votes were being solicited from the P.E.P. Board for the 1982 Gandhi Peace Award, a NEW YORK TIMES/CBS poll reported that a breath-taking eighty-seven percent of Americans were now in favor of the Freeze, as long it did not disrupt the bal-

ance of power. With this encouragement, long-time New York activist and P.E.P. supporter Cora Weiss proposed a march and rally for early summer. In a few short months her idea blossomed into a unprecedented demonstration of citizen support.

On June 12th a million people from across the nation (over three thousand from the New Haven area alone⁷¹) marched through the streets of New York to demand the Freeze “now”. William Sloane Coffin [GPA '67] opened the rally by signaling the release of thousands of silver balloons, whose disappearance into the sky was meant to represent the end of nuclear weapons. Following him were Orson Welles, Coretta Scott King, and ecologist and third-party Presidential candidate Barry Commoner, who warned, “The evil fantasy of war has not been banished by the dream of peace.” Speeches by union and religious leaders, the head of NOW, a spokesperson for the European Peace Movement, and others were interspersed by entertainment from “name” rock stars and gospel groups, including surprise appearances by Bruce Springsteen and Joan Baez, who told the crowd, “We have to move a mountain, and when I see you all here today, I believe that we really can.”

The climax was the address by the Freeze’s originator. Ms. Forsberg told the hundreds of thousands gathered in Dag Hammerskjöld Plaza:

Rejoice, friends! We’ve done it. The Nuclear Freeze Campaign has mobilized the largest peacetime peace movement in the history of the United States. The politicians in Washington don’t believe it yet. They will. They think that this is just a fad. It’s not. They think that if they simply talk about arms control, we will let them build the next generation of nuclear weapons. We won’t! ...

We call for sanity. We call for an end to the nuclear arms race. Until the arms race stops, until we have real peace and real justice worldwide, we will not go home and be quiet; we will go home and organize. ... Many members of Congress who have endorsed the Freeze are still voting funds for new nuclear weapons [such as] the MX missile—the most destabilizing, dangerous boondoggle in the history of the world. ... We will demonstrate and demand until our would-be “leaders” in Washington hear us. ...

With the Freeze we can stop not just the MX, but a whole new generation of nuclear weapons: cruise missiles, two new bombers, the Trident II submarine-launched missile, neutron bombs, and their counterparts on the Soviet side. How can we spend twenty billion dollars a year on these stupid weapons while infant

⁷¹ Recollection by Alfred L. Marder, a principal coordinator of the buses to and from the rally.

nutrition and school lunches are cut back; student loans are cut back; the elderly are forced to go without heat and eat dog food; and twenty percent of the black population is unemployed?

We demand that the fundamental decency of this nation be restored. We demand that rationality and self-preservation be restored. We refuse to let our lives and livelihoods be destroyed by bureaucrats who can't think of anything else to do but what they have done for the last thirty years. The Freeze movement will not be co-opted. We will not be pacified by endless negotiations. We demand that talks begin on real reductions.

... Our existence is contaminated by the nuclear arms race. We will not go home and forget. We will go home and organize. ...

Despite the popular sentiment, despite the rhetoric from the President and lesser politicians, within days after the rally the Kennedy-Hatfield resolution was blocked in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and two months later the House equivalent lost by two votes after intense lobbying by the Administration and nine hours of rancorous debate.

Until that time the Freeze Campaign was firmly non-partisan and uninvolved in endorsing or attacking particular parties or candidates. So for the 1982 elections the focus was on passing resolutions and referenda, counting on the growing popular support to make the difference for the new Congress.

In October, as the Gandhi Peace Award ceremony was in the final planning, the November *Scientific American* hit the news stands. The cover article was a scientifically phrased, profusely illustrated article by Ms. Forsberg, "A Bilateral Nuclear-Weapon Freeze". Millions of copies were sold via newsstands and subscribers. The Freeze Campaign distributed fifty thousand copies nationwide. Once again Ms. Forsberg's unique confluence of arms expertise and peace activism had made her absolutely the right person to advance the cause of peace.

The 1982 Award Ceremony

Several hundred filled the United Church on the Green in New Haven that Wednesday evening before Thanksgiving Day, November 24th, to witness the presentation of the Gandhi Peace Award to Randall Forsberg. To many present, who had

spent months collecting petition signatures and votes in their towns to advance the great project she had initiated, she was the pre-eminent peacemaker of the time.⁷²

Before the ceremony, P.E.P. Board members, staff, and ceremony participants joined Ms. Forsberg for dinner at the Park Plaza hotel in downtown New Haven. The youngest at the table was Katarina Forsberg, thirteen, who had driven with her mother from Boston. (Ms. Forsberg was known for spending her few spare moments with her daughter, and a two-hour drive was an opportunity not to be missed.⁷³) Also present was her mother, Eugenia Clark Watson, who also came to New Haven for the event.

That night she became the twenty-third person and fourth woman to receive the Award.⁷⁴ It was a night for recognizing women: bespeaking her growing direct role in the affairs of P.E.P. as Assistant Director, and the organization's growing awareness of the need to incorporate more women into its activities, Alice Ziegler Frazier for the first time conducted the event. Another Alice gave the introduction; it was the Rev. Alice "Allie" Perry, assistant minister of the church, taking part in her first P.E.P. activity as "hostess". Ms. Forsberg gave her acceptance speech, and singer-songwriter Cyd Slotoroff, who had sung for the Caldicott Award two years before, performed. Katarina and Mrs. Watson were even recognized as they sat in the front row. The only male on the program was P.E.P. treasurer and Yale law professor emeritus Thomas Emerson; he made the actual presentation on behalf of P.E.P. president Roland Bainton, who was out of town.

In her remarks, Alice Ziegler Frazier said, "If we could ask Gandhi to mount the platform tonight and give us a message, he would probably say, 'My life is my message.' And so, taking our cue from him, each year our organization carefully selects the person or whose life and deeds most merit recognition for their contribution to world peace." She recalled that Erik Erikson, in his book *Gandhi's Truth*, had written:

⁷² TIME, however, missed the story. TIME's "Man of the Year" for 1982 was, incredibly, the personal computer.

⁷³ The Freeze resolution in the Senate had been delayed for a weekend when Sen. Kennedy's office found they could not reach her on a Friday afternoon. She had taken off with Katarina for a few days of skiing in Colorado, and had deliberately left no forwarding number; first things first.

⁷⁴ The others: Eleanor Roosevelt in 1960, Dorothy Day in 1975, and Helen Caldicott in 1980.

Gandhi often spoke of his inner voice, which would speak unexpectedly in the preparedness of silence—but then with irreversible firmness and irresistible demand for commitment. The moment of truth is suddenly there, unannounced—and pervasive in its stillness. But comes only to him or her who has lived with facts and figures in such a way that he or she is always ready for a sudden synthesis and will not, from sheer surprise and fear, startle truth away. But acting upon the inner voice means to involve others on the assumption that they, too, are ready—and when Gandhi listened to his inner voice, he often thought he heard what the masses were ready to listen to.

“This seems to say so well,” she continued, “how people like Randy Forsberg come to us at a time when our need is greatest, and are inspired to give form and life to an idea whose time has come. In spite of the many woes that beset our nation this Thanksgiving, we can surely be thankful that the Freeze has given hope to the masses, an idea to which they are ready to respond and a way to assure their survival and the survival of the planet.”

Cyd Slotoroff stepped up and energetically delivered a set of songs, one of which captured the suppressed fears of a child in the nuclear age:

*Can anybody hear me, does anybody care?
I had a real bad dream last night, today I'm still scared.
I dreamed the bombs were falling, and I was stuck at school;
Mama wasn't home, Daddy was at work—he was all alone.
I've had dreams like this before; I try not to let them show;
Once I told my mom and dad, once they held me close—
But I think they forget that those bombs are really here
Someone could get mad, they might slip,
And we'd be gone—we'd just disappear...*

And Mom replies,

*I will not abandon you, I will be here by your side,
Sometimes crying, sometimes fighting to save our love, to save our lives
Oh, my darling, I was hoping you didn't know...*⁷⁵

Everyone joined in when she closed with Ed McCurdy's hopeful yet wistful “Last Night I Had the Strangest Dream.”

⁷⁵ “Can Anybody Hear Me?” (excerpts) by Cyd Slotoroff, © 1983 BMI, from her 1987 recording *Crossings*.

After the singing, Alice Ziegler Frazier gave a tribute to Lou Zemel, “a long-time member of P.E.P.’s board of directors, who had conceived P.E.P.’s two national conferences. He had balanced his role as proprietor of Powder Ridge, Connecticut’s largest ski resort, with, as Alice put it, “his tireless efforts to promote world peace and his constant pursuit of justice for the oppressed”; she said he had “left this life before his work was finished. All of us who knew and loved Lou feel his presence here tonight and we want him to know that we’re working to make his dreams a reality.” She then called for a moment of silence.

She then introduced Allie Perry. Like Ms. Forsberg and her mother, Rev. Perry had started out as a high school English teacher; like Jerome Davis, Roland Bainton, and many others associated with P.E.P. she was a Yale Divinity graduate. She was known as the minister most active in social justice issues in the area, was the president of the area’s Ground Zero Week project, and had mightily pushed local Freeze activities. Her small part in the ceremony marked the beginning of her ties with P.E.P., which led to a position on P.E.P.’s Board two years later.

Rev. Perry gave a brief welcome in the name of the church, then introduced Thomas Emerson, describing him as one of the nation’s most distinguished constitutional lawyers, a proponent of the Equal Rights Amendment, and a member of the Governor’s Committee on the Status of Women. Prof. Emerson made the presentation to Ms. Forsberg, reciting the names of past recipients and displaying the bronze medal with Gandhi’s profile. He presented it to her and read the framed citation (the wordiest ever) calligraphed for P.E.P. by Leon Wilson:

*In recognition of your dedication, vision, and courage,
and for alerting people of our country to the dangers of
the nuclear arms race. Because of your keen insight
into the machinations of the military-industrial complex,
your awareness of the need to find solutions for preventing
a world nuclear holocaust, and your faith
in the power of the people as shown by your imaginative
initiation of the nuclear freeze movement, you have
demonstrated the highest traditions of humanity in
your efforts to achieve a peaceful world for all people.*

Presented on the twenty-fourth day of November, 1982

PROMOTING ENDURING PEACE

Roland H. Bainton

Ms. Forsberg's address concluded the program. Having recently co-authored *The Price of Defense*, she focused on the staggering social costs of pouring the world's treasure into the means for its own destruction. She condemned the numerous new weapons systems in development, with their staggering costs and incalculable dangers. She reflected on the results of the 1982 Congressional elections, which she felt had been altered by the Freeze tide, and called for a strong effort to elect candidates positive to the Freeze in the 1964 elections. She outlined a detailed strategy for cutting annual national military expenditures from three hundred billion to fifty billion dollars (which in hindsight would have spared the nation from its nearly-hopeless debt quagmire). And she recalled that her own daughter was present, and that an end to the nuclear terror was needed for her and all the children.

After the Award

In the years after the Award, state and local bodies continued to endorse the Freeze resolution. The U.S. House of Representatives passed the resolution in 1983, but the Reagan forces succeeded in blocking it in the Senate. After that defeat Ms. Forsberg and others decided that the only path forward was to replace some Congressmen with new ones who would be more responsive to their constituents. She was already chairperson of the Freeze Campaign and director of her institute, which had a mounting work load of arms-related studies in preparation. Now she got behind Freeze Voter '84, the first national peace movement political action committee (PAC)—a major departure from the position of pristine non-partisanship the Freeze had heretofore maintained.⁷⁶

The next reversal for the Freeze effort was the suicidal failure of the 1984 Democratic Presidential campaign to wholeheartedly embrace the Freeze, though Freeze Voter did succeed in having a strong arms control plank in the Democratic platform. Ms. Forsberg's interpretation was that "the Democrats were handed this issue on a

⁷⁶ Bill Curry, Democratic candidate for governor of Connecticut in 1994, was the executive director of Freeze Voter for a year in 1984.

silver platter, but he lost it by giving [it] only lip service. In the televised Presidential debates, people could see that Mondale was not serious in his support... whereas Reagan had total conviction about his policy. People in the Freeze movement were so disappointed and discouraged they lost their drive.”⁷⁷ Instead Mondale wrapped himself in his proposal for a tax increase, handing Reagan a landslide.

The fatal blow to this historic citizen’s movement came after the election when Ms. Forsberg urged that the PAC continue under the name Freeze Voter. She recruited George McGovern, the most successful Presidential peace candidate in U.S. history, to take her place at the helm of the PAC. But when she presented her proposal to the Freeze Voter board, they turned it down on the basis that the organization needed broader leadership and that she and McGovern would dominate it. The disappointment marked the end of her activist roll in peace organizations, and the beginning of the end for the Freeze movement and for a unified and powerful peace movement. (Freeze Voter continued on, making a decisive difference in numerous Congressional races, but waning along with the national mood for the Freeze campaign until its dissolution after 1988 elections.)

After the program those present could pick up a copy of a brochure Ms. Forsberg had published the year before outlining the plans of her Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies (I.D.D.S.). She proposed to prepare an authoritative study of Soviet military capabilities since World War II to determine the validity of “the widespread view... that the Soviet Union maintains excessively large, offensively oriented military forces [and] that an aggressive stance on the part of the U.S.S.R. drives the main arms race.” A follow-up study would develop a similar profile for U.S. forces, to enable the intelligent comparison required for effective disarmament planning. She planned to continue her world-class reports on nuclear weapons in the world, focusing on two trends that make nuclear war more likely: the rapid increase in total numbers of nuclear weapons, and the deployment of battlefield weapons for fighting “limited” nuclear wars. A review of national and global military research and development activities was to be another project, to refute the doctrine that advances in weaponry could and should not be controlled. She announced two new journals, a monthly summarizing

⁷⁷ From an interview in *Technology Review*.

the status of arms control negotiations in the world, and the *Peace Resource Book*, an exhaustive directory of U.S. peace and disarmament organizations. Most important to her was the project titled “Confining the Military to Defense”, based on her theory of how to reorient the national military forces away from war. It was a natural—simply the answer to “what comes next” after a nuclear weapons freeze.

Her work since then has unfolded in a way impressively parallel to those plans. What started as a one-woman one-desk operation is now a major academic enterprise, with a staff of seventeen and a budget close to two-thirds of a million dollars.

In the year after receiving the Award, she won (among many honors) the MacArthur Foundation’s “genius grant” of forty thousand dollars a year for five years. She wrote numerous articles, book chapters, and studies, lectured hundreds of times about arms control issues, co-sponsored peace conferences, joined the board of a dozen academic and public interest groups, and testified before numerous government and military agencies. In 1989 she presented a formal briefing on arms control to the new Bush administration, attended by the President and his Vice President, Secretary of State, C.I.A. Director, and National Security Advisor. In 1995 she was appointed to the advisory committee of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. She has authored many articles and book chapters, edited a book series, and she is an adjunct fellow of the Harvard’s Center for Science and International Affairs. Though she is still working on her Ph.D. dissertation, she has already received honorary doctorates from the University of Notre Dame and Governors State University. The Carnegie Corporation and the MacArthur Foundations are funding her Institute’s *magnum opus*, a multi-year study of cooperative approaches to international security.

That study is the fulfillment of the theory she originally presented during the days of the Freeze Campaign. The basis of the theory was an outline of the three primary ways military force is used: for aggression and defense against it; for deterring other nations from aggression; and for domestic control/suppression of deviant or dissident elements of the population, and liberation from such suppression. Her disarmament strategy was to “de-legitimize the most aggressive military functions—unilateral superpower conventional intervention and nuclear superiority aimed at backing it up—and to reduce the forces most suited to those functions.” From that point the forces of

the major military powers maintained for deterrence could be cut. There would be “a period of time for the relaxation of East-West and Sino-Soviet tensions and the democratization of world political and economic structures,” and a strengthening of “international non-military mechanisms for conflict resolution and peacekeeping.” Next, all military forces would be “built down” to “short-range anti-aircraft, anti-tank, and anti-ship forces suitable for national territorial self-defense.” In the final stage, national defense forces would be converted to non-military defenses and internationalized into a world police force.

Although the years of the Freeze Campaign were the pinnacle of her national prominence, she and her disarmament strategies have continued to exert powerful influence over world defense and disarmament planning. She criticizes the U.S. leadership for responding to an unparalleled level of national security (the only potential enemy recent Pentagon studies could cite was North Korea) with proposals for increases in military spending, a refusal to pursue arms control measures, and successful campaigns to manipulate the United Nations, weakening world confidence in collective security. The claims of reductions in the military budget are valid only by comparison to the peaks reached during the Reagan years, she notes; the “reduced” amount is still equivalent to the levels maintained throughout the pre-Reagan years when the Cold War was in full force.

With the U.S. facing no strategic enemies yet accounting for forty percent of all military spending, she voices the question, “Why does needless military spending remain impervious to reduction, while critically needed domestic programs are slashed?” In answer she cites these factors: vested interests, national arrogance, lack of vision, fear of change, public ignorance, confusion, caution, demoralization, and “cultural brainwashing”.⁷⁸ The United States, far from moving toward disarmament, is leading the industrialized nations in purveying weapons systems to Third World nations, whose people desperately need every weapons dollar for basic survival needs. Ms. Forsberg points out the supreme irony, and the supreme villainy, of the cycle of arms sales and war preparations: “The forces and defense industries needed by the

⁷⁸ From her article “Force Without Reason” in the summer 1993 issue of *Boston Review*.

industrial countries are largely a function of regional arms buildups created by their own arms exports.”

Instead of a quick series of single-issue campaigns, she now foresees a decades-long struggle for disarmament similar to the anti-slavery crusade of the last century. At the forefront of this struggle are two hopeful signs. One is a renewed effort to promote peace education, an effort that will require a multi-year, multi-million-dollar commitment of foundation funding to succeed. The other is a new Washington-based coalition of public interest groups known as the Military Spending Working Group that has hopes of initiating a Freeze-scale national campaign to cut the military budget. As she wrote recently:

A convergence of national and local efforts could create the first opportunity in decades for broad public education on U.S. security policy and military spending. With a concerted effort, this new activism might awaken the one group capable of cutting the Pentagon to size: the taxpayers who fund it.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

Chapter Nineteen

1983-84: Reclaiming Our Futures—Robert Jay Lifton

After the 1982 Congressional elections President Reagan threw gasoline on the anti-nuclear fire in 1983 by proceeding with the deployment of cruise missiles in Europe and declaring the Soviet Union to be “an evil empire”, “the focus of evil in the world”, while proposing the fantastical “Star Wars” space-based anti-missile system and announcing in jest before the start of a live news conference that he had launched the missiles and “abolished” the Soviet Union. (Soviet forces were put on red alert.) In Asia Soviet commanders mistook the civilian Korean Airlines Flight 007 for a military plane and shot it down.⁸⁰ The prestigious *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* moved the minute hand of its Doomsday Clock the closest it had been to midnight since 1983.

Meanwhile, in Europe thousands turned out for an April 1 Green movement rally to protest the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons on the Continent. In this country the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign pressed on, with local initiatives to declare symbolic “nuclear-free zones” in numerous communities, while in Washington the twentieth anniversary of the “I Have A Dream” March attracted three hundred thousand people and demanded that Congress pass the Freeze resolution. Freeze Voter '84 was ramping up at lightning speed to work for the election of pro-Freeze candidates.⁸¹ A television miniseries, “The Day After,” stunned hundreds of millions of viewers with its graphic portrayal of the aftermath of a fictional nuclear hit on middle-American Lawrence, Kansas. Most remarkably, the three hundred American Catholic bishops *by consensus* issued an eloquent pastoral letter on war and peace that condemned the arms race, called for a bilateral nuclear weapons freeze, and criticized a national policy based on a balance of terror.

The impact of that letter was such that two of the six nominees for the 1983 Gandhi Peace Award were members of the five-man committee that had drafted it. First

⁸⁰ Incredibly, the head of the John Birch Society was one of those killed.

⁸¹ The remarkable Scott Nearing, P.E.P. stalwart and saintly proponent of simplicity, celebrated his one hundredth birthday on August 6^t— the same day Board member Ruth Gage Colby was in Hiroshima representing P.E.P. and WILPF at the annual observance of the first atomic attack.

on the alphabetical list was the name of the man who had expertly shepherded the letter through the drafting process, Cardinal Joseph L. Bernardin.⁸² The paragraph under his name in the nomination memo noted that the Awards had frequently honored Protestant clergy (and once a Rabbi), but never Catholic, and that recognizing Cardinal Bernardin now might encourage this “important new force” of a “strong moral response... on the grass roots level.” Next on the list was Bishop Daniel P. Reilly of Norwich, Connecticut, another committee member.

The other four names were Thomas Emerson, retired Yale law professor, civil liberties crusader, and P.E.P.'s treasurer and a member of its Executive Committee almost from the beginning; Robert Jay Lifton, Yale professor of psychology and psychiatry (see below); Alva Myrdal, who had almost won the Award two years before and who did win the Nobel Peace Prize for her disarmament diplomacy; and John Somerville, who coined the word “omnicide” to describe the likely effects of nuclear war, and who would receive the Award three years later for his advocacy of the no-first-use movement, among other things.

In the final tally Cardinal Bernardin received almost fifty percent more votes than any other candidate. Next was Dr. Lifton, who edged out Alva Myrdal by a single vote. Prof. Emerson, Dr. Somerville, and Bishop Reilly were next. Unfortunately, the Cardinal was in extreme demand, and could not agree to a date to accept the Award. The honor passed to Robert Jay Lifton.

Robert Jay Lifton

Helen Caldicott [GPA '80] addressed the “what” of nuclear radiation and its effects on human beings. Randall Forsberg [GPA '82] addressed the “how” of the sane response to the nuclear weapons threat. Now, with the terror of nuclear holocaust uppermost in the public mind, people were asking “why”.

It was the role of Robert Jay Lifton to advance a persuasive theory of why nuclear weapons held such power over the collective mind. He held the Foundations' Fund

⁸² As reported in the NEW YORK TIMES during September, a letter was leaked from inside the F.B.I. that ordered agents in the Cardinal's home base of Chicago to begin surveillance of him in an attempt to discover anything that could discredit him and the pastoral letter, and also to initiate measures to sabotage any Catholic peace education activities inspired by it. Also v. *In These Times*, September 7-13, 1983, p. 10.

Chair for Research in Psychiatry at Yale, and was also the third physician to receive the Award. His theory has two parts: effects on the people, and effects on their leaders.

Beginning with his 1962 study of survivors of the Hiroshima bombing, published in 1967 as *Death in Life*, and in his 1982 book *Indefensible Weapons*, Dr. Lifton had explored the psychological effects of nuclear weapons for fifteen years. His book on Hiroshima, considered a classic in the interpretive interview form of history, won the National Book Award in 1969. Since then he had “demonstrated that all of us are living as ‘survivors’.”

All of us know that any day, at any time, our cities, our countries, and the whole world as we know it could be instantaneously obliterated. As a result, we are fundamentally different from all human beings who lived before the nuclear age. They knew that war, disease, and individual death were inevitable; but they were sure that the world would go on existing after they were gone. Today we have no such assurance.⁸³

How can human beings exist in the face of such dread? If the world can cease to exist at any moment, how can any individual’s life or actions have meaning? When faced with an overwhelming threat, Dr. Lifton showed, the mind simply shuts it out. In his book about Hiroshima survivors he named it *psychic numbing*. Since then he had realized that the same defensive mechanism was at work throughout the world, deranging humanity and distorting human civilization, a pervasive collective denial, a mass resignation to living everyday lives on the brink of annihilation.

Ordinary life is necessarily shrouded in a layer of pretending, of living “as if” something true were not. And this psychic numbing is most pronounced in precisely those aspects of life that are most meaningful—our families, our work, our spiritual lives—which are blighted by “a deep ambivalence that we cannot afford to understand or even to recognize. Precisely in those relationships where we should be most real and most whole, we are forced to dissemble, divided against ourselves.”⁸⁴ Our capacity to experience authentic life is diminished; diversion, distraction, and insignificance become our preferred reality; like Hiroshima survivors, but more pervasively, we experience “death in life.”

⁸³ Ira Chernus, “The Symbolism of the Bomb”, THE CHRISTIAN CENTURY, October 12, 1983.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

Dr. Lifton projected that one route of false escape would be through fundamentalism, which enables participants to cling to a simplistic, emotionally satisfying (and often apocalyptic) value system within the bubble of psychically numb experience. The commercialized, ever-shifting tabloid culture that absorbs the masses in trivia is another—what Dr. Lifton called “the new ephemeralism,” in which people bounce from one attachment to another, with no sense of prudence or permanence, having lost their sense that the future even exists for them. The new man, he wrote, is “the Protean Man,” who changes shape to fit the circumstances but cannot define his own essential shape when alone.⁸⁵

Dr. Lifton's studies of psychic numbing have included the pre-Holocaust Jews in Germany; he attended a talk at Yale in 1982 by Elie Wiesel, who said that the Jews were unprepared for the Nazi onslaught because they could not imagine the depth of German barbarity. He believed that imagining the consequences of a nuclear holocaust must be the first step to confronting its possibility and envisioning a world beyond that possibility—the vision that could inspire the mass committed action needed to bring that world into being.

If the people are enmeshed in psychic numbing, their leaders and the others who sustain the nuclear instrumentality are living under *nuclearism*. Dr. Lifton described it as “a total ideology in which ‘grace’ and even ‘salvation’—the mastery of death and evil—are achieved through the power of a new technological deity. The deity is seen as capable not only of apocalyptic destruction but also of unlimited creation.”⁸⁶ The mighty mushroom clouds, with their “sense of awe and transcendent power and even beauty... provide glimmerings of—and for some, enticements toward—experiencing the unexperienceable.” The transcendence not available in life is found in the means of life's end.

⁸⁵ The Protean Self: Human Resilience in an Age of Fragmentation (Basic Books, 1993). Dr. Lifton recently identified President Clinton as an example of the "Protean self" because of the fluid personality he evidences in confronting shifting issues. He speculates that this many-sidedness--a result of being exposed to a modern plethora of ideas and experiences—may turn out to be adaptive in this time of extraordinary dislocation, “enabling a leader to respond quickly to changing times and to avoid getting caught in dead ends.” “Americans don't singularly embrace [this style] but they are getting used to it,” Lifton says. “Perhaps there is a sense that this is a contemporary style with more relevance for our world.”

⁸⁶ Robert Jay Lifton, *The Broken Connection* (Simon & Schuster, 1979), p.369.

The mere thought of The Bomb summons up complex responses, “only some of which are conscious.” It is the essence of our ideal of “national security”, provides millions their livelihood, assures us national invulnerability and preserves us from conventional attack; it makes us, the superpower, super-powerful. The vision of imminent nuclear war is essentially religious: omnipotent power breaking into world history, shining instant nexus of heaven and hell, delivering us from everyday existence; assuring its perpetrators immortality in their service as pontifex of ultimate destruction. And the leaders and technicians who control this almighty power—how can they help feeling a touch of the divine?⁸⁷ How then can they, or the superpower nation itself, willingly give up such incandescent power? The essential identity of the nation and its leaders is thus inextricably bound in their dependence on nuclear weapons, while the extreme idolatry of nuclearism—“the abomination of desolation in the sepulcher”—underlies its ultimate immorality.

Born in New York City, Dr. Lifton’s social awareness had its roots in his Jewish upbringing during the Depression; his parents, free-thinkers who embraced the Jewish ethical tradition while turning away from religious Judaism, encouraged him to question society’s injustices and consider radical solutions. earned his medical degree from New York Medical College in 1948. After a psychiatric residency in Brooklyn, he was a psychiatrist for the Air Force in Japan and Korea. He did research in psychiatry from 1956 to 1961 at Harvard and at the Center for East Asian Studies in Cambridge, focused on mind control techniques and “thought reform” in the Chinese Cultural Revolution.

While at Harvard he began meeting with other professors alarmed by Eisenhower’s bomb shelter construction program. He and academics like sociologist David Reisman and psychologist Eric Fromm published a newsletter that considered the psycho-social effects of the nuclear threat and helped initiate the field of psycho-history. There he learned that no one had ever done a full study of the psychological impact of the Hiroshima bombing—humanity’s first encounter with nuclear war. Opting for basic research, he arranged to move to Hiroshima and spent two years studying the

⁸⁷ Helen Caldicott implied another symbolic meaning for nukes in the title of her 1984 book about the arms race, *Missile Envy*.

psychological characteristics of Japanese youth in general and Hiroshima survivors in particular.

“I lived in Hiroshima for six months, and you carry that experience with you,” he said in 1982.⁸⁸ “You are a survivor by proxy. You feel a responsibility to them and the Hiroshima experience. It’s my legacy now, my personal history, and it was a crucial turning point for me in my work and in my life.”

The horrors experienced by the survivors of this atomic bomb, whose yield was only a fraction of today’s nukes, were shocking and traumatic even to hear second-hand. It was there he first focused on the phenomenon of psychic numbing as the means whereby survivors “shut out the sea of death and disfigurement merely to exist.” Several of the milder accounts included in *Death in Life* remind us of the ghastly enormity:

I walked near the Hiroshima train station and saw people with their intestines and brains coming out of their bodies, I saw an old woman with a [dead] baby in her arms, many children next to their dead mothers. —*A 17-year old girl*

In front of a school there were a lot of boys the same age as my son. What touched me the most was seeing two dead children. One was lying on the dirt, and the other was crawling over her, as if she was trying to run away. Both of them were carbonized. —*A businessman whose son died*

A man with his eyes hanging from the orbits called me by my name and I felt sick. People's bodies were tremendously swollen—it's impossible to imagine the size a swollen body can reach. —*A woman*

During the 1970s he pioneered again, this time in the study of the psychology of Vietnam veterans. He wrote *Home From the War: Vietnam Veterans—Neither Victims Nor Executioners*⁸⁹, which was nominated for the National Book Award in 1974. By the time he won the Gandhi Peace Award he had published twelve scholarly books, and had authored two politically-conscious cartoon books along the way. He had also received six honorary doctorates and a variety of other academic and civic honors.

He became a leading spokesman for Physicians for Social Responsibility, calling for a post-nuclear world order that frees the world from “the ultimate terrorism” of achieving national security via nuclear superiority. He saw the Freeze phenomenon

⁸⁸ In an interview by David McKay Wilson, “Crossing the Line: Robert Jay Lifton’s Quest for Life”, *New Haven Advocate*, December 1, 1982, p.3.

and the grass-roots awakening of anti-nuclear spirit as evidence of incipient recovery from the mass psychosis: “The mind is rebelling against the distortions of numbing and denial. ... The task now is to transmute that fear [of doomsday] into constructive action. ... Some are still stewing in their fear. But acknowledging the fear is a first step.”

He was one of the delegates to the first congress of the international parent of which P.S.R. became the U.S. branch, held near Washington, D.C. in March of 1981. There he guided the development of a statement on the psychological costs and effects of nuclear war, focusing on defense mechanisms that, while helpful in the short run to individuals, made nuclear war more likely by impairing “the realistic perspectives of those who possess nuclear arms.” The statement listed avoidance, i.e. psychic numbing; drawing upon old ways of thinking, e.g. by striving for security by piling up more and more weapons, *ad absurdum*; fear and impulsivity which incites irrational mistrust and panic responses that set off similar responses in adversaries; perceptual distortion, in which a possessor of an absolute weapon must justify its potential use by seeing the enemy as absolutely evil; and dehumanization, in which the humanity of the “target” is denied, and one’s own humanity is lost in the process.

Moved by “that wondrous and fragile entity we know as human life,” Dr. Lifton functioned as a peace activist as much as an academician. One of his Harvard mentors, the Pulitzer Prize-winning psychiatrist John Mack, said at the time:

Robert Lifton is a very courageous person who takes on the hard topics: where the human race has become aberrant and gone off into mass destructiveness and death. He calls to attention the dark side of our collective mind. He forces us to take responsibility for our destructiveness, which is unparalleled by any other species. He’s now pointing to the Holocaust as just the curtain raiser for the final solution not just of the “Jewish problem” but the “problem” of humankind. It is being prepared in the Rocky Flats and where the Trident submarines are constructed. He’s one of the most eloquent voices who remind us of this inclination, and challenge this distorted thinking.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Published by Simon & Schuster and Touchstone in 1973.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* Dr. Mack has recently made reference to the psychic numbing phenomenon in reference to the reluctance of society to consider seriously the implications of credible accounts of abductions of humans by alien beings, and his career has suffered greatly as a result. In a section titled “The Deracinated Self” of his 1990 book Lifton discusses alien abduction experienc-

The 1983-84 Award Ceremony

To accommodate Dr. Lifton's schedule, the Award ceremony was postponed from October 1983 to the evening of January 12th of 1984. The event was moved to the Center Church on the Green in New Haven. As in the past, Board members and ceremony participants gathered with the honoree for dinner before the event at the Park Plaza hotel a block south of the church.

The program began with a brief description of P.E.P.'s work by executive director Howard Frazier, highlighting the two Volga Peace Cruises P.E.P had sponsored in 1981 and 1983. In reference to literature distribution, he mentioned that free copies of Dr. Lifton's NEW YORK TIMES article reprint "Nuclear War's Effect on the Mind", along with some of the psychiatrist's books, were available at the literature table.

Singer-songwriter Cyd Sotoroff performed a set of original songs, including one she had written for the event, "The Next Step". It evoked the activism happening locally, and perfectly expressed Dr. Lifton's message about the challenge of psychic numbing:

*Sitting by the t.v. as the evening news is shown,
A fury rises up in you, there's the power to explode—
Then a weakness overcomes you, there's a sorrow in your heart—
How can you stop this deadly race, where is the place to start?
Take the next step—step by step, taking each one as you go;
Don't wait until your plan's complete! For you to help the plan unfold,
Take the next step—step by step, feel the strength you've got to give,
Joining many other steps, that our precious earth may live...
Tuesdays at twelve o'clock, her articles in hand,
She offers people passing by, "Learn the facts! And take a stand!"
While others meet in living rooms with Gandhi as their guide,
"We've got to stop those Trident subs—we'll lay our bodies on the line!"
Take the next step—step by step...⁹¹*

es as part of the dissociative constellation of psychological byproducts of our rapidly changing times. One reviewer commented, "The current era is 'an age of numbing' that has left the Self detached and disaffiliated from the outside world. It displays impaired symbolization with a marked separation of thought from feeling. [Lifton] cites a paper on multiple personality disorder that considers the abduction experience a 'mythic version of childhood abuse.'

⁹¹ "Take the Next Step" (excerpts) by Cyd Sotoroff, © 1984 BMI, from her 1987 recording *Crossings*.

Howard then introduced Martin Cherniack, a P.E.P. Board member who had been associate director of P.E.P. in the mid-seventies, attended medical school at Stanford, and was currently serving as a medical officer at the Centers for Disease Control in Cincinnati. For several years he, like Drs. Lifton and Caldicott, had been active with Physicians for Social Responsibility (P.S.R.), organizing chapters and speaking to groups about the medical perspective toward nuclear war.

Having journeyed from Cincinnati for the event, Dr. Cherniack began his introduction of Dr. Lifton by recalling that the American peace movement was grappling with how to turn “the anxieties and hopes of the past two years” into productive action and “away from despondency and a frenzied and anesthetic denial.” He referred to the list of Gandhi Peace Award recipients as “a community of the great, the good, and the committed; from the first to the current recipient, we see the same high standard of humaneness in public life.” He hailed Dr. Lifton not only for his studies and other scholarly accomplishments, but also for his ability to work effectively in many fields and communicate outside the academic setting while achieving the highest professional respect within that setting.

A specialist in occupational medicine, Dr. Cherniack cited Dr. Lifton as “the only example where a social scientist has successfully assisted in obtaining monetary awards via the judicial process for emotional abuses related to industrial conditions inflicted on West Virginia miners.” He recalled that Dr. Lifton had already been honored by the cities of Hiroshima in 1975 and Detroit in 1983 “for his ambitious and civilized efforts to wager human rationality, ethics, and science against the final hand in our martial history.”

He praised the guest of honor for his work in understanding the psychological causes and effects of “the two holocausts of the Second World War—one technological and instantaneous [i.e. Hiroshima and Nagasaki]; the other cultural, psychological, sadistic, and prolonged [the Nazi extermination programs]. He has analyzed them for insight into the factors that take us to the brink of our destruction.”

He concluded by praising Dr. Lifton for three accomplishments: first, for taking on the toughest, most controversial areas academically, yet expressing “a priority of commitment to a more rational and humane society” in his work with P.S.R. and in

support of the Trident Nein activists.⁹² Second, for integrating his work and his social justice commitment so thoroughly that P.E.P. could for the first time “recognize a person for contributions to peace generated from work in [his] chosen academic field. And third, for contributing numerous concepts and terms crucial to the understanding of mass death experiences, such as death anxiety, survivor guilt, psychic numbing, protean man, ephemeral man, and the nuclear savior—“providing us tools to transform the discussion from the semi-scientific language of nuclear technology to the level of how we really think and function in the nuclear world.”

He then introduced P.E.P.'s treasurer, Thomas Emerson, who again stood in for Roland Bainton in presenting the Award.⁹³ Prof. Emerson made mention of the sad news that P.E.P. Vice President and former head of World Fellowship of Faiths, Willard Uphaus, had died October 8, 1983. (Ruth Uphaus, his wife and a long-time Board member, took over his P.E.P. post.) He then presented the Award citation and the medallion to Dr. Lifton.

The citation, calligraphed and framed as usual by Leon Wilson, read:

In recognition of his concern for social justice as exemplified by his research work, writings, and lectures; the pioneering work he has done in interpreting the psychological effects of nuclear weapons among Hiroshima survivors; and his leadership in the struggle to prevent a nuclear holocaust in our world.

Presented on the twelfth day of January, 1984

PROMOTING ENDURING PEACE

Roland H. Bainton, President

Dr. Lifton accepted the award with a nod to his young daughter Natasha, who was in the front row. He also recognized the many peace activists who filled the church sanctuary, numbering them among the “large numbers of people whom I call ‘peace

⁹² The Trident Nein [stet] was a group of nine activists, including New Haven beekeeper Vincent Kay, who on July 4th of 1982 symbolically attacked with hammers the U.S.S. Florida, a Trident submarine at Electric Boat in Groton, taking literally the Biblical injunction to “beat swords into plowshares and study war no more.” They were tried and convicted, and five were jailed in Connecticut for nearly a year. Dr. Lifton spoke at benefits to raise money for their defense.

⁹³ Dr. Bainton died later that year.

colleagues” who were leading the shift from individual to collective effort against “nuclearism”. He called on them to follow Gandhi’s example of militant nonviolence on behalf of peace and justice, recalling that Albert Camus had said that “while previous generations were called upon to change the world, our task is to keep the world from destroying itself.”

He pointed to the way the anti-nuclear theme was permeating society, from the taxi driver who took him to the airport to the hundreds of millions of viewers who had watched the simulated nuclear bombing of Lawrence, Kansas, in the commercial television program “The Day After”. The evening after the program Dr. Lifton had spoken to people in Lawrence, and had noted “a strange psychological process” in the citizens who had just lived vicariously through their own nuclear destruction—a process whereby their customary denial of the nuclear threat had dissolved, invoking “survivor-like reactions in advance of the dreaded event,” leaving them eager to consider actions to eliminate that threat. He saw this same dawning of awareness beginning throughout the nation and the world.

In Hiroshima, he said, he had discovered that survivors undergo a series of predictable psychological experiences: the “death imprint,” an indelible awareness of the massive phenomenon of death; death guilt and survivor guilt, an obsession about what they should or could have done, and did or didn’t do, and a sense of having been able to do so little; the psychic numbing experience; and various struggles in human relationships. “And finally, overridingly, a struggle for meaning. What does this event mean—the actual event, as in Hiroshima, and the dreaded event, as in the anticipated nuclear genocide.” He had found that these experiences produced one of two results: either sustained numbing, the death in life; or a kind of illumination, a coming through the dark abyss into the light of wisdom at the other end. The dawning awareness in America of the nuclear danger and the possibility of taking action to end it could be seen an example of the latter, with masses of people struggling to emerge into a world free of nuclear terror.

Part of that was, he said, the emergence of peace education on an unprecedented scale at Yale and many other universities, in marked contrast to Yale’s role in doing “so much to create nuclear weapons and forward nuclearism, and so precious little to

combat them, to diminish them, to work on behalf of peace.” Learning about the nuclear system and people’s reactions to it, and seeing the common patterns with other holocaust-scale catastrophes and the reactions of their survivors, people can escape their paralysis and helplessness; consequently, “there is no issue on which the teaching and learning are of greater importance.”

The awakening process, he said, was in a race with the continuing efforts of the “nuclearists” to “threaten the ostensible adversary” and thus strengthen their system, and even worse the deranged vision of “those who seek to create a religion around the nuclear end—who welcome the nuclear holocaust as the [apocalyptic] end that will bring the beginning” of a new and better world. “Nothing could be more deluded.”

Dr. Lifton then proposed ten points, which taken together were the psychological and moral equivalent of Randall Forsberg’s political strategy for achieving nuclear disarmament. Both were/are essential in providing the tools necessary for that achievement, which he said would require cultural and moral breakthroughs along with political struggles. More than that, they were a simple exposition of his own personal life strategy. He called them “A Nuclear Age Ethos,” ten principles of psychological, medical, and ethical relevance to facing down humanity’s greatest challenge.

The *first* imperative on the list was to fully acknowledge **that the world faces a new dimension of destruction**, not simply more, but qualitatively different—the end of human civilization and possibly of humankind. The *second* was **to reject that nuclear end** (and any hope of post-nuclear-war salvation) by committing to the flow and continuity of human life and the human imagination. *Third* was the acknowledgment that **nuclear weapons bring all nations and peoples together in a new way**, facing “a universally shared fate:” either common survival or common extinction. *Fourth* was the affirmation of the **collective human power** to “imagine the real” and thus bring awareness, change, and mobilization to assure human survival. The *fifth* step in the program was the conscious and total **rejection of nuclearism**—“the dependency upon, and even worship of, nuclear weapons.” That includes the illusion that people can make themselves secure using nuclear weapons, plan and prepare to survive a nuclear war, protect themselves and recover from its effects, and stoically prevail through the

resulting catastrophe. And it includes a recognition that rationality and “nuclear security” are mutually exclusive.

Dr. Lifton’s *sixth* step was to **affirm that a non-nuclear world is truly possible**—“a world that reasserts the great chain of being and directs its energies toward humane goals... and genuine human security.” The *seventh* step was to **acknowledge that “our own lives must be inevitably and profoundly bound up with the struggle”** to bring about the non-nuclear world we believe in.” To do that, we “step away from resignation—from ‘waiting for the Bomb’—and toward commitment to combating it.” And we continually ask ourselves what more we can do, how else we can live, to make our vision come true.

And how do we commit ourselves? Point *eight* holds the first key: by **blending the anti-nuclear struggle with our working life**, contributing the special expertise and imagination of whichever profession we follow to the overall effort, “in this way we unify our own lives.” And point *nine*, the second key, is just as important as the first: by understanding that the **struggle is not about embracing “doom and gloom, hopelessness and despair, but rather a fuller existence.** In *confronting* a genuine threat rather than *numbing ourselves* to it, we experience greater vitality.” In courageously turning away from delusion and denial and distraction to face the shadow of death, we truly taste life—“we feel stronger human ties, we turn to beauty, love, spirituality, and sensuality, we touch the earth and we touch each other.”

His *tenth* and final point proclaims the ultimate victory—**that we win simply by engaging in the struggle.** “In struggling to preserve humankind, we experience a renewed sense of human possibility”; we become contributors to humanity’s greatest historical achievement and humanity’s next evolutionary advance; we redeem not only ourselves, but our species, and in so doing discover our relationship to humanity and all life “to be newly alive.” “Doctors become in a more genuine sense healers; universities become more genuinely centers of learning for more genuine students and teachers; all of us become through the struggle truer expressions of the great persons we truly are but, without the struggle, are too numb to know ourselves to be. Through the struggle, **“we reclaim our own futures”** by “refusing to head inevitably toward our world’s final doom.”

Dr. Lifton closed his message with some lines from his favorite poet, W.S. Merwin:

*We all join hands and it is tomorrow.
It seems only yesterday when what I kept saying to myself was:
Take a leaf from the fire, hold your hand, see where you are going
And what I am trying to find is the beginning in the ashes.⁹⁴*

The month before he received the Award, he expressed in two sentences the essence of his ten points, and of his life's philosophy: "To work on issues such as nuclear proliferation... is not a death trip, but is something profound and rewarding. To do it, you need considerable humor and strong love in your life. It is something that calls forth in me my own quest for more positive and more joyous experiences."

After the Award

In the years following his Award ceremony, Dr. Lifton continued his research and study into past and prospective holocausts, including the role German physicians played in facilitating the Nazi exterminations and the genocide of Armenians by Turks in the early part of the twentieth century.⁹⁵ He is currently the Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry and Psychology at John Jay College and The Graduate Center of the City University of New York and continues to speak and organize in a range of venues on behalf of peace, disarmament, and social justice.

⁹⁴ These lines were transcribed from a low-fidelity tape of Dr. Lifton's speech and probably do not accurately relay the poet's words.

⁹⁵ In doing so he discovered that the Turkish authorities have been heavily funding chairs in Turkish studies at major universities and hiring the professors as public relations consultants to undermine the belief that the Armenian massacre is a historical fact. He initiated a project to expose and protest this subversion of the academic process.

Chapter Twenty

1984: Women's Ways and Women's Stories—Kay Camp

It was the year George Orwell had warned us about. The Cold War dragged on, as Soviets blockaded the Summer Olympics in Los Angeles and the U.S. continued implementing cruise missiles in Europe, vastly increased the military budget, and pressed the Soviet Union as hard as it could over Eastern Europe. More and more the focus of progressives was on Central America, where the U.S. was mining Nicaraguan harbors, funding counter-revolutionary guerrillas, and the inundating El Salvador with weapons to be used against supposedly Communist insurgents. The non-partisan character of the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign had shifted to the Freeze Voter efforts to support pro-Freeze candidates, with impressive participation but limited effect on the mass of voters. Former Vice President Walter Mondale was conducting possibly the most inept campaign in modern times, and would carry only his home state and the District of Columbia in November. The Reagan landslide would carry in on its coat-tails most of the Congressmen Freeze Voter hoped to defeat. The sense of immediate nuclear danger, and immediate opportunity to do something about it, was fading, as other issues (especially Central America) came to the fore.⁹⁶

The dozen nominees for the 1984 Award reflect this shifting in progressive interests, including an unusual number of new names. First on the alphabetical list was Kay Camp of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, who had been nominated in 1975 and 1979. The Rev. John Collins, director of Clergy and Laity Concerned, was next. Admiral Noel Gaylor was nominated for his campaign for a substantial reduction in military spending. Senator Mark Hatfield, a chief advocate for the Freeze resolution in the Senate, was next. George Kennan was nominated for his advocacy of improved U.S.-Soviet relations. Dr. Otto Nathan, a peace activist closely associated with Albert Einstein, was next, followed by the co-founders of the Peace Museum in Chicago, Mark Rogovin and Marjorie Benton.

⁹⁶ The year was also marked by the assassination of Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India. Alice Ziegler Frazier, who officially became P.E.P.'s associate director in February of 1984, wrote to Kay Camp that the killing "calls to mind the circumstances of Gandhiji's

Three arms control advocates, Herbert Scoville, John Somerville, and Paul Warnke, were also nominated; Scoville had lectured at the symposium that preceded Helen Caldicott's Award ceremony, and Warnke and Somerville had been nominated twice before. Next was Cora Weiss, a prominent New York City peace activist who had been nominated in 1979 and had initiated the huge nuclear freeze rally in 1982. The final nomination was a first: THE NATION magazine, possibly the leading U.S. progressive publication, then approaching its one hundred twentieth year of publication; "because this is the year Orwell marked," wrote the nominator, "... it is especially appropriate to award a defender of peace and freedom like THE NATION."

When the votes were counted, Kay Camp was the decisive choice. (John Somerville and THE NATION were next in votes.)

Howard Frazier notified Dr. Camp in a letter dated August 14th. He mentioned October as the preferred month of the Award ceremony, and said that her long-time friend and the former executive director of WILPF, Mildred Scott Olmstead, would do the introduction. She wrote back on August 22nd, having just returned from vacation in Maine:

In sorting through [the mail] these last two days—a full mailbag and a cardboard box—I find only three messages that are not demands, requests, or obligations. Yours, of course, is just the opposite: a totally unexpected, undeserved bonus—a gift of immeasurable worth! I am quite overwhelmed with the idea. To be associated with such truly great persons in the peace movement as have been identified with the Gandhi Peace Award is an honor I will have difficulty adjusting to. But I am willing to make the effort in the hope that younger women and volunteers will be encouraged by your Board's decision! (Regarding... Mildred Scott Olmsted—she herself is acknowledged as a monumental figure in the Peace movement, but prefers to push others to the fore.)

She suggested October 25th as the date, "which women claim as Women's Disarmament Day" within Disarmament Week at the United Nations. Her home was in Pennsylvania, but she would be in New York for the U.N. event. Howard wrote back to accept the date, and to invite her to attend the pre-ceremony dinner and to stay with him and Alice at the P.E.P. house for the night, where Ms. Olmsted would also stay.

death and of all that he represented. Let's hope his tradition of non-violence will prevail."

He suggested she take the train and included a schedule.⁹⁷ She did train in, and stay with the Fraziers.

Kay Camp

Dr. Katherine Camp—known to all as Kay—devoted most of her life to the struggle for a better world, almost entirely through a single organization. Yet her story is not as much about her accomplishments as one of the greatest leaders in that worldwide organization’s history as about the human touch, the woman’s touch, she brought to her waging of the struggle.

Her evolution from a conservative Republican upbringing on an New Jersey farm to the presidency of an international peace association began at Swarthmore, from which she was graduated in 1940. Like her friend Randy Forsberg [GPA ’82], she taught high school English after college. She married a doctor, left teaching, became the mother of three boys, and fulfilled the stay-at-home wife-mother role through the 1950s. During that time, her college-born interest in progress toward international harmony was nurtured by volunteer work for the World Federalists and the Friends Peace Committee.

One day in 1958 she picked up a news magazine called *Four Lights* from a group with the jaw-breaking name of Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom—WILPF for short. (The publication was later renamed *Peace and Freedom*.) It described the activities and goals of an organization with roots in the women’s suffrage movement, whose first president, Jane Addams, and first secretary, Emily Green Balch, were both winners of the Nobel Peace Prize. Founded in Holland in 1915, nine months after the start of World War I, suffragists, socialists, and reformers from many nations who gathered at the Hague, WILPF had advocated a consistently progressive agenda for over four decades, “as much opposed to war as they were united in the belief that women had a responsibility for guarding and nurturing the human race.”⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Alice Ziegler Frazier represented P.E.P. at the National Women’s Conference to Prevent Nuclear War in Washington in mid-September, where Ms. Olmsted was a principal conference speaker, and the two discussed Ms. Olmsted’s part in the Award ceremony. After the conference Howard wrote her that Alice had reported that her “rousing speech brought the delegates to their feet.”

⁹⁸ Joel Bleifuss, “Kay Camp Takes Stock”, IN THESE TIMES, May 15, 1996.

She wrote in 1984 that when she was done reading her first issue of *Four Lights*, her uppermost thought about WILPF was, "This is for me!"⁹⁹

In 1963 she read Betty Friedan's *The Feminist Mystique*; while not an instant convert to feminism, she recalls, "I recognized myself on every page." Her growing feminist outlook blended with her WILPF experience to inspire a vision of the importance of women's demanding their rightful place in the world's affairs. Having been the underdog for so long, and too often the victims of male violence, women are more sensitized to issues of social justice and peace, she reasoned. With that in mind, she contributed the WILPF slogan: *Listen To Women For A Change*.

She paid her movement dues over the next five years, attending meetings, organizing conferences, doing the thankless committee work that knits together the chapters of a far-flung organization. At the same time she became increasingly opposed to U.S. foreign policy in general and Vietnam policy in particular, urging the organization toward more active opposition. By 1968 she had become the national president of WILPF, AND for the next three years she led the fifteen thousand U.S. members of the League through the darkest period of the Vietnam War. Her effectiveness and the scale and dedication of the membership she represented made her one of the most important peace movement leaders in America, and one of the most sought-after for endorsements, commentary, and speeches. It also made her one of the public figures most reviled as a commie, dupe, or fellow-traveler. "I've been harassed so many times, it's hard to remember how often and when," she said recently.

That summer she went to Denmark to represent U.S. WILPF at the League's international convention. As the congress opened, the news spread from one woman to the next: Soviet tanks had rolled into Czechoslovakia. Tension between the Soviet and Eastern European delegates was incredible; Dr. Camp helped prevent the disruption of the convention by walk-outs, joined others in getting the angry delegates to focus on

⁹⁹ There is a noticeable overlap between WILPF and P.E.P. Former WILPF Executive Director Mildred Scott Olmsted was a P.E.P. stalwart after retiring, while P.E.P. founder Jerome Davis and Board members Ruth Emerson and Gen. Hugh Hester were on WILPF's list of International Sponsors, along with Gandhi Peace Award recipients Benjamin Spock, Linus Pauling, and Corliss Lamont.

what they shared in common, and helped pass a resolution endorsed by all sides against military intervention by any nation.

She joined the WILPF delegation to Vietnam the following year, meeting with women's groups from the U.S.-supported South, but also crossing into "enemy territory" to meet with women from the North and from the National Liberation Front guerrillas. It took courage and had to be done against the wishes of the U.S. government, which considered it consorting with the enemy. She became friends with the leader of the South Vietnamese women's peace group, Ngo ba Thanh, who was considered a subversive by her government and jailed in 1971. Dr. Camp pressed for her release for two years; finally the government relented. In the year she received the Award, she wrote of the women there "who poured out their grief-stricken experiences of the war's devastation."

During a meeting in a Buddhist temple, in and around our discussion of such agonizing issues, some of the "enemy" women wrote poetry—their way of memorializing the moment, and perhaps of keeping some perspective. When the time came to say goodbye, the women expressed their gratitude for our coming by presenting their most meaningful tokens of connection: small photos of their children.

Dr. Camp joined Gloria Steinem, Betty Friedan, and others organized the National Women's Political Caucus in 1970. She founded her community's civil rights group and was jailed for protesting nuclear power. Like Gandhi himself, and unlike many other leaders of the peace movement, she demonstrated her willingness to commit acts of non-violent civil disobedience to advance her cause—two of which landed her in jail. She blocked draft boards, sat in at the White House and the Capitol, and confronted authorities in numerous other places to ensure that women's voices for peace and justice were heard.

After the end of her term as national president in 1971, she got involved in progressive electoral politics. In 1972 she won the Democratic nomination in her suburban Pennsylvania district to run for Congress. Though the massive McGovern loss sank her candidacy with it, she at least out-pollled him in her district. (In 1984 she recalled that the news story in 1972 about her candidacy had been headlined, "Woman

Seeks Congress Seat.” “That is no longer news,” she reflected, in the midst of the Mondale-Ferraro campaign.)

During 1973 she and other WILPF members became profoundly disturbed by reports of a blood bath after the duly-elected but Marxist leader of Chile, Salvador Allende, was overthrown and killed in a C.I.A.-sponsored coup. They visited the new Chilean ambassador to the United Nations, who in the course of denying the accusation commented, “If you were there you would see for yourself.” Dr. Camp recalls, “And we said thank you, we accept your invitation.” The Pinochet military government did not provide the WILPF delegation a warm welcome; instead a newspaper article in the government-controlled press ridiculed “these old ladies, each equipped with engagement books to ascertain how many liters of blood have been spilled.” The article mentioned the address where they were staying, possibly to imply some threat. Instead it gave families of victims the contact information they needed. Under the cover of night, many of them made their way, at great risk, for miles through the curfewed streets to give private testimony of the horrors being visited upon their loved ones by the U.S.-sponsored regime. “We met with women political prisoners, *poblacion* dwellers, wives of imprisoned officials, and others not on the ‘official’ program,” she wrote in 1984. “The plea was always, ‘Tell the world what is happening here.’” After the delegation returned home, Dr. Camp testified before the U.N. Human Rights Commission about the abuses she had witnessed and heard about.

In 1974 she was elected International President of WILPF and “had the privilege of WILPF-hopping around the world” to link up with her compatriots in the struggle. She recalls that though the plane was many hours late arriving in Australia from Singapore, “there were three cheerful, warmly welcoming Australian WILPFers patiently waiting at three o’clock in the morning!” It was an illustration of the point she made more than once: that WILPF was about women supporting each other as much as its political agenda. “Nowhere is that bond stronger than with the Soviet women who have shared our twenty-three year series of seminars,” she wrote in 1984. She recalled the warmth of the visit some of them paid to her home and the gathering with them and some neighbors and WILPF members. She sent a packet of photos from the evening to the women in the U.S.S.R.; years later, when she obtained the release of WILPF

files kept by the government, she was dismayed to discover that the F.B.I. had copied every picture before sending them on to their Soviet addressees.

A sizeable part of heading WILPF is travel, much of which she did in “Camp’s Camper”, criss-crossing the country to meetings and “many memorable demonstrations. In 1977 she was a delegate-at-large and principal speaker at the first National Women’s Conference in Texas, witnessing the arrival of the torch carried by more than a thousand runners in from Seneca Falls to Houston during International Women’s Year. During her term as International President she led WILPF missions to North and South Vietnam, Cuba, Chile, Iran, and Central America.

In 1978 she was appointed a special adviser to the United States delegation to the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament. The following year she was the one and only representative of the American peace movement at demonstration of thirty-five thousand people in Brussels to protest the deployment of cruise missiles in Western Europe. She recalled in 1984, “The CBS bureau chief came from Paris, he said, to find out why I was there! This question would certainly not be asked today.”

In early 1980, as her term as International President approached its end, there was another example of Kay Camp’s special kind of diplomacy. She had joined a delegation of Americans on a trip to Iran to seek a peaceful way out of the hostage crisis. One day she found herself walking between two long columns of black-clad women out to commemorate the killing of thousands of dissidents at the hands of the deposed Shah. “Death to Carter!” many shouted at her, holding pictures of their dead, wailing, viewing her and the other Americans as representatives of the “Great Satan”, the nation that had played the crucial role in overthrowing Iran’s elected leader in 1953 and sustaining the Shah’s long and brutal tyranny. The tension built to a breaking point; at last Dr. Camp “couldn’t bear such hatred, so I approached a group and fumblingly tried to convey my sorrow at their loss.” It was a terrific risk—a heart-stopping moment. But heart-stopping turned into heart-warming when they “immediately put their arms around me and our small circle grew larger as we comforted one another, feeling that special bond.”

After her term ended in 1980 she became a member of the international executive committee, serving as Coordinator for Disarmament. Also in 1980 she was a founding

board member of Randall Forsberg's Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies and began six years of service on the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO.

The list of international congresses, U.N. conferences, peace symposiums, college appearances, and WILPF meetings throughout the world that she had a leading role in during the 1970s and early 1980s would be long indeed. Her style was always to treasure the blend of movement "business" with the warmth of the woman-to-woman bond. One example was WILPF's STAR—"Stop The Arms Race"—demonstration in March 1983 at the international WILPF headquarters in Brussels, which she had initiated around the end of her term of office. She marched as one of a hundred twenty American women with several thousand Europeans and others from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. She recalls, "A Dutch countrywoman marching next to me asked, 'You American?' When I owned up, she flung her arms around me: 'So good you here!'" Another example came late that same year, when she led a six-woman WILPF delegation to Moscow for the League's eighth seminar with the Soviet Women's Committee. "On a bitter cold day," she remembers,

we were on a hill where Moscow University overlooks the city, and a wedding party drove up and got out of their car. The groom and his shivering bride, who was clad in white with only a jacket over her shoulders, warmly urged us to join them, and we all toasted their health and peaceful future with champagne and apples.

In 1984 she became vice-chair of the U.N.'s Non-Governmental Organizations (N.G.O.) Committee on Disarmament. Other awards she had received as of 1984 included the Gimbel Philadelphia Award and the Pomerance Award. She was also awarded honorary degrees from her alma mater and from Haverford College, which described her as "an activist for international peace."

In a letter she wrote to members before the Gandhi Peace Award ceremony in 1984 that reviewed her long experience with WILPF, she revealed her distinctive style of activism, and perhaps also the distinctive style of women's activism. She reflected that, to her, "WILPF is, at root and heart, a priceless collection of women's stories—far-reaching in distance and time, global in breadth, and wise in experience. It is a story born of continuity and connections between people and between issues. **All of us together are the world!**"

The 1984 Award Ceremony

Following the usual pre-ceremony dinner at New Haven's Park Plaza hotel, the Award ceremony began shortly after 7:30 at Center Church on the Green. Like the program two years before, it was an all-women-save-one program (the exception being P.E.P.'s former associate director and new President, Dr. Martin Cherniack), at which Dr. Camp would become the fifth woman out of the twenty-five Award recipients—the third woman recipient of the decade.¹⁰⁰

The welcome was made by Alice Ziegler Frazier, who in February had been officially appointed to her *de facto* position as P.E.P.'s Associate Director (to be re-titled Co-director the following year). The death of P.E.P. President Roland Bainton was announced¹⁰¹, along with the passing of long-time Board member Ruth Gage Colby.

Alice then introduced Mildred Scott Olmsted, who at an age over ninety was P.E.P.'s oldest Board member. As the former executive director of WILPF, she had worked closely with Kay Camp when the latter was national president and then international president of the League. She was also a vigorous and articulate speaker whose age was more a matter of chronology than faculties or appearance. In fact, that very day she had attended an afternoon meeting of N.G.O.'s at the United Nations¹⁰² and met with U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar about N.G.O. matters. The week afterward, Alice wrote to her, "So many people remarked on your dynamism and ebullient energy. They were impressed that without a single note (certainly no teleprompter), you delivered your message with such clarity and grace."

Dr. Eleanor Daubek (Ellie) Hamilton, a P.E.P. member, sang several songs while accompanying herself on guitar. Dr. Cherniack then made the presentation to Dr. Camp. The citation¹⁰³ read:

¹⁰⁰ The others were Eleanor Roosevelt in 1960, Dorothy Day in 1974-75, Helen Caldicott in 1980, and Randall Forsberg in 1982.

¹⁰¹ He died February 12, 1984.

¹⁰² P.E.P. Board member the Rev. Christoph Schmauch also attended the meeting, then drove to New Haven for the Award dinner and ceremony.

¹⁰³ Continuing the recent trend toward wordiness, it was thirty percent longer than any previous and four times longer than the citations for early awards.

In recognition of your lifetime devotion to peace, justice, and human rights in the world.

As National and International President of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, as special UN advisor on disarmament, and as a UNESCO Commissioner, you have provided exemplary leadership and wise counsel.

As a champion of the oppressed, you have traveled to world trouble spots—Vietnam, Chile, Iran, and Central America.

In addition to being an educator on the problems of nuclear proliferation, human rights, and arms control, you have steadily and creatively worked toward their solution.

Your honest, straightforward pursuit of truth, as well as your non-violent acts to protest injustice, truly exemplify the noblest tradition of Mahatma Gandhi.

Presented on the twenty-fifth day of October, 1984

PROMOTING ENDURING PEACE

Martin Cherniack, President

Dr. Camp made a short acceptance speech that Alice described as an “excellent, substantive message... All were impressed with the depth of thinking, as well as the challenges presented to peacemakers.”

Minimal evidence of what was said by anyone on the program survives in P.E.P.'s files. A note the following week from Dr. Camp does give some indication that she referred to the lingering effects of war, especially the emotional wounds that would not heal, as indicated by the fact that though the official count of U.S. dead in Vietnam was about 57,500, “more than twice that number died counting those who died by their own hand.”

She also addressed the question on many minds in the shadow of Reagan's imminent landslide re-election: what has the peace movement really accomplished? “WILPF's long perseverance for peace and freedom has taught me to celebrate our gains as well as measure the distance yet to travel,” she answered in another letter. She

then listed some encouraging developments that could be traced to the massive effort to drag the issues of peace and disarmament into the national spotlight, such as:

- Reagan has been forced by public opinion into a new acting role—peacemaker.
- Italy’s prime minister has called for a freeze on further NATO missile deployments.
- The House and Senate voted to ban anti-satellite testing in space.
- The House voted a moratorium on sea-launched cruise missiles.
- A hundred thousand Japanese demonstrated against deployment of Tomahawk missiles.

Concluding, she urged her audience not to quit. “We must become even more active and vocal, transforming our anger and frustration over the inhumane priorities of militarist leaders into energy to build our global movement for justice, freedom, and peace.”

After the Award

Since 1984 Kay Camp has continued with her WILPF and U.N. work in less all-consuming positions. Her children are grown and she is now the grandmother of seventeen! She has written and spoken widely on peace, disarmament, human rights, women’s rights and responsibilities, foreign policy, and the United Nations.

Her husband, Dr. Bill Camp, has developed dementia, and she spends much of her time at home caring for him. “It’s frustrating, but I manage to keep in touch,” she said in 1995. She still gives talks to peace studies classes at nearby colleges and is active with the WILPF chapter in her retirement community in Haverford, Pennsylvania.¹⁰⁴

WILPF is still important to her for the same reasons as when she first encountered it in 1958. “Until we do achieve equality, it is important to remind women of their responsibilities and their rights, and not be co-opted by the present male-dominated system,” she said in 1995. “Groups like WILPF are very relevant today, and will continue to be well into the future, since I don’t think we are going to achieve partnership with men any time soon.”

And what about that future?

¹⁰⁴ Joel Bliefuss, *op. cit.*

We have deteriorated a great deal in terms of our ideals. The rise in the death penalty, the failure of health care reform, the things our children are not learning in school, and are learning from television—all pretty discouraging. We have been “zombied out” by the press’s failure to present the issues. The whole idea that we are entering the information age without much concern about who controls the information is frightening. I do see hope in the growing grass-roots recognition of what is at stake.¹⁰⁵

Ultimately she continues to put her faith in “a sense of relationship to people around the world, a sense of relationship to the past and to the future.”

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

Chapter Twenty-one

1985-86: Treating the Nuclear Disease—Bernard Lown

The strengthened peace movement having had some success in restraining the heightening of U.S.-Soviet confrontation, Moscow and Washington reached a compromise agreement in January of 1985 to resume negotiations toward limiting and reducing nuclear weapons and preventing an arms race in space. The accession of Mikhail Gorbachev in March 1985, and his subsequent moves to dramatically lessen superpower tensions and reform the Soviet economy, set in motion events that would ultimately bring the Cold War to an end. In 1986, though the Reagan Administration refused to reciprocate, the Soviets went ahead with a unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing. Meanwhile the focus on Central America continued to intensify, as President Reagan called U.S.-sponsored Nicaraguan contras “the moral equal of our Founding Fathers” and Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega compared Reagan to Hitler. In July 1985 Congress voted to prevent Reagan from supplying the contras with anything but “non-lethal” aid, but approved his request for twenty-seven million dollars to aid them, and a hundred million dollars the following year. Peace activists turned their attention increasingly toward Nicaragua and El Salvador, and also to asserting the clarified demand “Peace With Justice”—made more urgent when, in May, Philadelphia police trying to dislodge members of a black political organization called MOVE firebombed a house from the air and set the neighborhood afire, killing eleven and leaving two hundred homeless.

The broadening concerns of progressives made for a broader selection of Award candidates and issues—thirteen in all. First on the alphabetical list was Dr. Kevin Cassidy and his wife Edith, for their work as peace activists in Fairfield County; “their work is an example of the effort that must be conducted on the local, grassroots level if American public opinion and public policy are to be more supportive of peace.” Second was Harvey Cox, the well-known Harvard theologian who had been outspoken for peace and for more equitable and humane policies toward Latin America. Next was the 1984 Presidential candidate and *de facto* leader of the African-American community, the Rev. Jesse Jackson, whose concern for the oppressed and his negotiations

with U.S. “adversaries” had shown him to be one of the few national figures “making the link between peace and justice”, as his nominator put it. Fourth on the list was Coretta Scott King, who had been nominated in 1979 and was still carrying on her husband’s civil rights work.

The next name was that of a renowned cardiologist named Bernard Lown, organizer of Physicians for Social Responsibility (see below). Then came Seymour Melman, long-time co-chair of SANE and the author whose articles about the arms race had been most frequently reprinted by P.E.P over the years. The head of the scientific group that had developed a credible hypothesis of Nuclear Winter in 1983, the media-savvy Carl Sagan, was also on the list. The eighth nominee was the world-famous activist-musician Pete Seeger, “a living symbol of the search for an enduring peace well steeped with justice.” Nominated for the fourth time was John Somerville, professor and national leader of the disarmament movement. Cora Weiss, nominated twice before for her multitude of disarmament activities in the New York City peace movement, was next, followed by George and Lillian Willoughby, their third nomination in recognition of their tax resistance and other non-violent non-cooperation with the national war-making system. Raymond Wilson, peace lobbyist for the Quakers, received his fourth nomination. The last nomination was the Witness for Peace movement for its courageous presence on the front lines in Nicaragua—only the second time an organization rather than a person had been nominated.¹⁰⁶

Two prospective nominations didn’t make the list. George Byer, whose cause was starting an international friendship week, was nominated again by someone from his town who sent voluminous material praising Mr. Byer’s work, and whose handwriting closely resembled the nominee’s. And Howard Frazier was nominated, not for the first time; as usual he declined with thanks and the comment, “As much an honor as it is, I do believe it would be preferable to postpone the nomination until after I finish my tenure here at P.E.P. Mainly, it may be a bit embarrassing to members of the Board to cast their votes, knowing that I am the one who counts them.”

The voting was unusually close, with numerous ties and many scores within a few points of each other. In fact, one Board member suggested that, in view of the excel-

lence of the selection and the recent flowering of the peace movement, the Award be given to the entire list. Despite the new emphasis on Central America and “peace with justice” at home, the candidate chosen was nuclear disarmament activist Bernard Lown.¹⁰⁷

Howard immediately wrote to inform Dr. Lown of his selection, suggesting a date in November. Dr. Lown replied that he was “absolutely delighted and deeply humbled to be the recipient of such a prestigious award.” He countered with a date “sometime in December, when I expect to have fewer constraints on my time.” The date was set for December 13th. Little did they know.

In October, with plans underway, it was announced that the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize would go to the organization Dr. Lown had founded, International Physicians for Prevention of Nuclear War; he would have to be in Geneva to accept the Prize on the agreed-upon date. Thus he became the third person to have been chosen for the Nobel Prize just after having been chosen for the Gandhi Peace Prize.¹⁰⁸

Negotiations bounced back and forth for months as to a mutually possible date for the Award ceremony, made all the more difficult by Dr. Lown’s new world stature. A date was finally set: April 15, 1986.

Bernard Lown, M.D.

In these perilous times,

optimism

*becomes a historic duty.*¹⁰⁹

He was the most scientifically authoritative person ever to head an international peace organization. He leveraged that authority into an unprecedented level of access to the populations of the opposing superpowers. His global organization of medical professionals gave the peace movement a substance and power that commanded a response from superpower leaders at the highest levels. The scientific character of that

¹⁰⁶ The other was THE NATION magazine, nominated the year before.

¹⁰⁷ Dr. Lown’s score exceeded the Cassidys’ by a single point; Carl Sagan and John Somerville tied for third.

¹⁰⁸ The others were Linus Pauling in 1962 and Amnesty International in 1977-78.

¹⁰⁹ Bernard Lown, spoken in the general session of the Fourth International Congress of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, Helsinki.

organization for the first time matched the mental forces devoted to generating the means of destruction with a brilliant counter-force devoted to eliminating those means. And along the way he saved thousands of individual lives and won the Nobel Peace Prize.

Bernard Lown was born in Lithuania in 1922, the son and grandson of rabbis. “My grandfather, uncle, aunt, and cousins, who were very dear to me,” he said in 1986, “were burned alive by the Nazis.” His father was a shoemaker who avoided that fate by coming to America in 1935. Demonstrating the American Dream, Bernard was graduated from the University of Maine *summa cum laude* and received his medical degree from Johns Hopkins in 1945. He did his residency at Yale, served as an Army doctor in the Korean War, specialized in cardiology, and rose to a professorship of cardiology at Harvard’s School of Public Health and the control of a research laboratory and staff at Boston’s prestigious Brigham and Women’s Hospital. There he made medical science history for three decades beginning in the 1960s, authoring over three hundred journal articles, two books, and chapters of eight others. While at Yale he inspired the formation of the national Association of Interns and Medical Students to press for better conditions, and during the Vietnam years he organized medical aid for victims of the war.¹¹⁰

Professionally he discovered an enduring fascination for the processes of life, and also for its most dramatic medical threat: sudden coronary death, the number-one cause of death in the United States. Claiming close to half a million lives each year, the phenomenon of the fatal “heart attack” is so pervasive that until quite recently it was not a favored research topic, but accepted as an inevitable outcome of severe heart disease that could be neither predicted nor controlled.

Dr. Lown revealed himself to be a medical science radical, cutting to the heart of problems others couldn’t even see with a scalpel of intensely focused intelligence. “His dedication has given him an uncanny ability to perceive the essentials of a clinical problem almost instantly, on both a scientific and an abstract level,” said Dr. Thomas Graboy, a younger protégé, in 1982. He drove his staff very hard, primarily by the

¹¹⁰ Source: Alfred Marder’s letter nominating Dr. Lown for the Gandhi Peace Award, March 15, 1985.

pace he himself set. “He has an inexhaustible pool of energy. He works nights, weekends, all the time.”¹¹¹ Another cardiologist, Dr. Sidney Alexander, said, “He’s brilliant, mercurial, and indefatigable. The man has an incredible amount of energy and a keen intellect.” Dr. James Muller, a Harvard cardiologist, described him as “an imaginative scientist, a compassionate healer, and a master teacher.”¹¹²

And he produced. He demonstrated that sudden coronary death is most often caused by a specific faulty rhythm pattern generated by a reversible electrical accident within the heart. He found that it could be identified, making the fatal heart attack somewhat predictable. He discovered that using a defibrillator on an out-of-control heart could “reset” its rhythms, and he invented a far-superior defibrillator called a cardioverter that used much less current more effectively, by sending a certain electrical wave form at just the right moment in the heart’s cycle to counteract the specific problem causing the heart to lose its rhythms. He found a way to administer a common dental anesthetic to heart patients that could almost eliminate ventricular fibrillation in the first place. He then discovered a technique for identifying people with subtle heart irregularities that could someday lead to heart attacks, so that they could be treated with anti-arrhythmic medicine that could head off the fatal fibrillation before it could start. Later he guided the development of anti-clotting medicines. To address the needs of the millions who will likely never be diagnosed, he advocated stationing one of the improved defibrillators wherever a crowd is likely to gather. “It is so simple a device that anyone can learn how to use it,” he once said.

And he began serious research into the mind-body link, noting that emotional trauma is as important as any physical factor in bringing on sudden death. He has written on the art of doctoring, that it is “a process for nurturing a specific human relationship that promotes a partnership for healing.”

I have always been persuaded that the biggest ethical issue in medicine does not relate to abortion, AIDS, or keeping people alive at the end of their lives, but rather to how we relate to patients. It is fundamentally an issue of caring, driven by

¹¹¹ Quoted in “The Heart Saver” by Ellen Ruppel Shell, *Technology Review*, June-July 1982, pp. 45-52.

¹¹² He is also the father of three.

a sense of duty and commitment. Medical schools have gone astray by inculcating doctors with the belief that they are applied scientists rather than healers."

Along the way he was awarded the Cummings Humanitarian Award of the American College of Cardiology.

As a professor he was no less productive. Dr. Martin Cherniack, in his address presenting the Award to Dr. Lown, said, "Dr. Lown's students have populated the cardiology departments of the leading teaching institutions of the United States, where esoteric clinical associations are sometimes called 'Lownisms'."

His life began the path that was to bring him to the world's greatest honor in late 1959. Peace activists who slave away in their local communities often wonder whether their efforts really have any effect. Did anyone who attended the lecture we arranged and paid for really take to heart what was said? Dr. Lown's experience provides one answer.

He attended a speech in England by Baron Philip John Noel-Baker, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize that year. A British statesman and Labour M.P. who helped draft the Covenant of the League of Nations and the United Nations Charter and worked actively for world disarmament until his death in 1992, Noel-Baker spoke graphically about the danger of atomic conflict. During his speech, a great truth manifested to the man whose life was about the conquest of sudden coronary death, the greatest threat there is to individuals: "I decided then that sudden *nuclear* death was the greatest threat there is to humanity."

When he returned to Boston he invited a number of associates to discuss it at his Newton home, and out of the conversation of eight physicians came the idea of Physicians for Social Responsibility (P.S.R.). It would be a national organization dedicated to the proposition that those who had committed their lives to healing had a special role to play in the safeguarding of the world from the ultimate medical catastrophe—the universal triage. He became its first president.

Their opening gambit was understandable, given that they were medical researchers. In a series of papers the physicians wrote that appeared in a special 1962 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine* devoted to the medical effects of nuclear war, the idea that any medical response to nuclear attack was even possible was authoritatively

dismissed. Dr. Lown's paper, "The Physician's Role in the Postattack Period," became a classic of nuclear war studies. One of its many findings was that a single relatively small bomb dropped on an American city would cause more burn cases than all the medical personnel and burn units on the American continent could handle. The articles in that issue (a copy of which is in P.E.P.'s files) are still considered among the best sources of information on what could happen to the civilian targets in a nuclear war.

The logical conclusion, in Dr. Lown's words: "The only medical response to a nuclear war is to work for its prevention."

In 1973 he journeyed with New Haven activist David Adams and a few other physiologists to the Soviet Union as part of a medical research exchange program set up by Presidents Nixon and Brezhnev.¹¹³ Dr. Lown conducted some research into sudden coronary death with a young Soviet heart specialist named Evgueni Chazov, who later became director of the National Cardiology Research Center in Moscow and personal physician to Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev.

P.S.R. continued at a low level of activity until 1979, during which time struggles over civil rights and the Vietnam War often drowned out its voice. But as superpower tensions rose to ever more frightening heights, Dr. Lown discussed reviving it with Dr. James Muller, an associate professor of cardiology at Harvard who had studied in Russia, and a friend of Dr. Muller's, Dr. Eric Chivian, an M.I.T. psychiatrist studying children's fears of nuclear war. They attracted the support of other forceful advocates of the anti-nuclear gospel such Helen Caldicott [GPA '80], who revived P.S.R. and became its president, and Robert Jay Lifton, who directed attention to the deranging effects of living continually under the threat of nuclear annihilation.

A conference was held in Boston, which included physicists and former Presidential defense advisors, that focused on the medical effects of a single one-megaton¹¹⁴

¹¹³ Scientific and cultural exchange programs such as this were terminated by the Reagan Administration.

¹¹⁴ Equivalent to a million *tons* of TNT. Dr. Lown wrote in 1981 that if a single megaton of TNT were to be transported by rail, the train would be five hundred miles long. The nuclear powers then had nuclear stockpiles equivalent to twenty thousand megatons, "providing five tons of explosive power for every man, woman, and child on this earth." (Journal of the American Medical Association, November 20, 1981, pp. 2331-2333.)

bomb exploded over Boston or Detroit. (Such a bomb would be seventy times more powerful than the one that destroyed Hiroshima; according the Congressional estimates, Soviet strategy actually allotted at least twenty megatons to destroy cities of that size.) They again concluded (and informed President Carter) that providing any meaningful medical relief was logistically impossible. They also warned that the recent advances in the technology of targeting nuclear warheads makes missiles standing ready in hardened silos vulnerable and useless for retaliation; “a symmetrical instability ensues wherein the temptation for an enemy to attack is at the same time inducement for one’s own preemption,” Dr. Lown wrote, further increasing the already perilous chances of a nuclear exchange.

Dr. Muller later commented on this approach to exposing the truth of nuclear war, “Our view is different from that of the nuclear chess players. We start with what a bomb does to one city, then go on to what a few do to a nation. It makes you wonder why we have all these nuclear weapons.”

Their next move was to focus worldwide medical attention on the problem through an international conference of U.S., Soviet, and Japanese physicians. “The inclusion of Japanese physicians is logical since they know better than anyone else what thermonuclear bombing means,” Dr. Lown said.

To be taken seriously, they would have to be above the bipolar fray. “Leaders of medicine around the world would have to be mobilized to make this stick, Dr. Lown later recalled. “I figured if we could get the Russians to join, we’d be taken seriously.”

In 1979 he made contact with Dr. Chazov, now a senior medical authority in the Soviet Union, in a letter that said, in part:

Over the past few years, I have been increasingly troubled by the growing thermonuclear arms race. The year 1978 marked an unhappy milestone for mankind, largely ignored. For the first time, the nations of the world have reached a level of military spending in excess of one billion dollars per day.¹¹⁵ These expenditures defy elementary logic, common sense, and the most essential morality. There is every likelihood that thermonuclear weapons will be used before the turn of the century. Both of our societies will not survive such a thermonuclear holocaust. The medical profession, alas, has so far remained silent. Does our

¹¹⁵ By 1981, Dr. Lown wrote, the amount had reached one million dollars per minute.

profession have no social responsibility except when the casualties start pouring in? I believe the physician has a unique capacity to influence society; silence denotes moral bankruptcy.

Dr. Chazov accepted Dr. Lown's proposal for a conference, reinforcing his points about the nuclear danger and pointing out that such weapons kill and maim even if they are never used, by consuming resources needed to treat and prevent disease.

A meeting was arranged in Moscow for April 1980. The three Americans, the Soviet, and four other physicians drew up the charter of the organization that would convene the conference, which became the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (I.P.P.N.W.). They described it as "a non-partisan international federation of physicians' organizations dedicated to research, education, and advocacy relevant to the prevention of nuclear war. To this end, I.P.P.N.W. shall seek to promote non-violent conflict resolution, and to minimize the effects of war and preparations for war on health, development, and the environment."

The plan was to lead off with a three-day event, with the first day for "frank, private interchange", the second for planning future meetings, and the third for public sessions and formal presentations. The pattern was the Pugwash conferences in Britain. Dr. Lown defined "the essential motif to be developed":

The physician charged with responsibility for the lives of patients and the health of the community must begin to explore a new area of preventive medicine, the prevention of thermonuclear war."

Given Dr. Chavoz's experience as personal physician to the head of the Soviet state, they had another theory as well. "In this secular age, the physician has become the confessor," Dr. Lown reasoned. "Every world leader has a personal physician who often exerts a bit of influence. If an M.D. is worried about something, others tend to believe it must be serious." Thus the disarmament message could be brought to the heart of the matter.

The doctors caught the rising wave of world concern about the growing nuclear danger with their first international conference near Washington, D.C. in 1981. Seventy-three formal delegates from eleven countries attended, thirteen of which were Soviet doctors. They prepared statements on the predictable and unpredictable effects of nuclear war, the inability of the few surviving medical personnel to cope with the conse-

quences, and the huge costs—social, economic, psychological—of continuing the arms race. The conference issued appeals to Reagan and Brezhnev, to the United Nations, and to fellow physicians throughout the world. The proceedings were well covered by mass media in the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.; the conference proceedings were actually read into the U.S. Congressional Record.

Physicians for Social Responsibility became the U.S. section of the new organization, which incorporated other national organizations such as the one in Britain called the Medical Association for the Prevention of War and similar groups in Japan and in the Soviet Academy of Medical Sciences.

The thought that physicians, normally relegated to individual concerns, had a special role to play in saving human civilization caught the imagination of the medical community; in their ultra-pragmatic view, it made sense. Physicians are those who have taken a special oath to assuage human misery and preserve life, said the charter; to follow that oath meant doing everything possible to prevent the greatest threat to life by ending the threat of nuclear war.

Over the next four years membership swelled. Attendance tripled at the second congress in April 1982, as did the number of countries represented. Held in Cambridge, England, the theme was the medical aspects of what would happen in Europe after a nuclear war.

A high point that year was an unedited prime-time program on Soviet national television featuring Drs. Lown, Muller, and Chazov, along with Dr. John Pastore, a professor at the Tufts medical school, all of whom were members of the I.P.P.N.W. board. Two other Soviet doctors balanced out the panel. The program opened with films of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, narrated by Dr. Pastore and continued with addresses by each physician. It was the first time that the citizens of one superpower had been permitted to speak uncensored about a sensitive topic to the people of the other. It was also notable for Dr. Lown's direct assault on the notion of civil defense, which was a cornerstone of superpower military planning. He said it was utterly useless and enormously dangerous.

The conclusion, now accepted as obvious, was then a heretical and possibly subversive stand against the civil defense policy of both superpowers, which had commit-

ted billions of dollars to preparing to survive a nuclear war using bomb shelters, stockpiled supplies, evacuation plans, hardened communications and control systems, and mass disaster medical training. It was a prime example of the usual military planning folly: preparing to fight the previous war with current technology.

During the Soviet program, which was rebroadcast to U.S. viewers via P.B.S. the following week, Dr. Lown viewers, among them Premier Brezhnev, that urban shelters would become “crematoria” in the nuclear firestorms. “The evacuation of a population is insane because it is based on the premise that we would know beforehand where the bombs will fall,” whereas weather and wind direction are unpredictable. “The whole concept of civil defense systems invites nuclear attack because any sign of a movement to evacuate would be interpreted as a preparation for war.”

Beyond that, civil defense planning gave credence to the concept of a survivable or even winnable nuclear war, and thus made nuclear war more likely. Launch a first strike, sustain the retaliation, then pick up the pieces as victors; it might be worth it if there were enough pieces. The deranged mentality of some nuclear planners could be truly chilling; a top Pentagon advisor, Thomas K. Jones, issued civil defense instructions (printed in the LOS ANGELES TIMES in January 1982) that proved how needed the message of I.P.P.N.W. really was. Jones had advised, “Everybody’s going to make it if there are enough shovels to go around. Dig a hole, cover it with a couple of doors, and then throw three feet of dirt on top. It’s the dirt that does it.”

For the Soviets’ part, Dr. Chazov’s prescription on the program was: “Nuclear weapons should be outlawed, their production stopped, and their stockpiles destroyed.” He attacked “militaristic propaganda that attempts to make people think that military might will continue in the future to be the most effective instrument of politics; that nuclear war is not only conceivable but even advisable in certain circumstances; and that one might expect victory in a nuclear war. To believe [such things] is to surrender to the mercy of those whose plans will turn our planet into an inferno.”

It was a gutsy thing for a Deputy Minister of Health and a member of the Central Committee to say. Dr. Lown said after the broadcast that it showed a significant shift in Soviet military thinking was under way: “There’s no more claptrap about winning a nuclear war, or survivability or restructuring Soviet society after a nuclear exchange.”

Unfortunately, President Reagan—who did not catch the program, which was turned down by all three commercial networks—went ahead and requested another four billion dollars for making plans to evacuate American cities.

I.P.P.N.W.'s growth continued; by the time of the 1984 congress in Helsinki, membership was 105 thousand and climbing. Messages of support came from the Pope, Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Democratic Presidential candidate Walter Mondale, President Reagan, and Soviet Premier Chernenko. Four hundred fifty doctors from fifty-three countries met for four days. The noteworthy development at the congress was the presentation of the Nuclear Winter hypothesis, which posited that a relatively modest nuclear exchange would throw up so much dust and soot into the atmosphere that the sky would be darkened for months, chilling the planet and cutting off the sun, which in turn would decimate the northern hemisphere, kill the tropical forests, exterminate most species, and threaten all life. (This would be on top of the destruction of the ozone layer, radioactive contamination of the food chain, etc.)

By the time Dr. Lown was chosen for the Gandhi Peace Award in 1985, I.P.P.N.W. counted some 145 thousand members in forty-one countries. Its annual budget was about a million dollars, making it one of the world's largest independent peace organizations.

The success of the physician's movement benefited the entire American disarmament movement. P.S.R.'s American membership grew along with its international parent's, reaching some thirty thousand by 1985. (Membership of the Soviet equivalent, which had government support, was about sixty thousand.)

Despite the tremendous growth, the results-oriented Dr. Lown grew increasingly frustrated. Speaking in medical terms, he often spoke for the Freeze: "We physicians have a prescription for how to avoid a nuclear holocaust. Stop all nuclear explosions." The group focused on efforts to stop nuclear weapons testing, which was a considerable challenge given that the United States had rejected three different treaties in the START negotiations since START I in 1973. Instead, in 1984 Congress voted to allow renewed testing of anti-satellite weapons, despite the fact that a nation's sudden loss of

its satellite surveillance capability would leave it blind and could incite it to launch a pre-emptive nuclear strike.

Dr. Lown remarked at the 1984 congress that since I.P.P.N.W. had started, “not a single major weapons system has been dismantled.” And one medical student delegate added, “We seem to be in danger of becoming an organization to study nuclear war rather than an enterprise that is trying to stop it.” After the congress Dr. Lown lamented, “At the same time we medical doctors have alerted public opinion, the risk of nuclear annihilation grows greater each day.”

I.P.P.N.W. was closely allied with the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign. “When you are at the edge of an abyss, progress is not going forward, it’s stopping”, said Dr. Lown. He felt that if the testing and development of thermonuclear weapons were curtailed, they would become old and unreliable, and the danger would gradually wither away. Both movements came to face the same dilemma. Their astounding growth was in part made possible by their apolitical character, enabling it to draw support from all sides. Yet that kept them from some tough statements and actions that could advance their agenda. As the *British Medical Journal* noted in writing about the I.P.P.N.W.’s dilemma in 1984, “Preventing a nuclear war is essentially a political problem, not a medical or scientific one.” The authoritative science the organization conducted was far more persuasive than the usual disarmament propaganda, but some members were concerned about the pitfall of “analysis paralysis”; ultimately the best science would not compel those whose interests were served by the nuclear war juggernaut to join the disarmament movement.

Even those non-partisan efforts had aroused opposition from the media spokesmen for hard-line Cold Warriors in the United States. As I.P.P.N.W. grew in size and influence, they sprang into action like some immune system reacting to a dangerous virus, playing out the standard Cold War line that anyone who wanted peace with the U.S.S.R. through any means other than their utter defeat and unconditional surrender was a Kremlin pawn, fellow-traveler, or dupe. The group was often accused of naïveté for its willingness to work with the Soviet government and accept its statements of support, and of questionable loyalty for singling out the United States for criticism.

In October 1985, for example, a syndicated column by John Chamberlain appeared in the *New Haven Register* that mocked the program of I.P.P.N.W. and other disarmament advocates, smirking at their naïve belief that achieving a peaceful world was “as easy as pie: just abolish nuclear weapons. He also scoffed at Dr. Lown’s call for humanity to “rise above the partisanship of nationhood”. Chamberlain wrote, “The Soviets have no intention of forswearing their national interest... they are going to get the best bargain possible... It is to the Soviets’ interest, however, to confuse the Western world about [their] objective, which is to keep the Communist edge in offensive weapons while they deprive us of the opportunity to test the efficacy of the so-called Star Wars defensive.”¹¹⁶

The Nobel Committee’s invitation to Dr. Chazov to accept the Prize was especially nettlesome to hard-liners, because it highlighted the fact that the co-founder of I.P.P.N.W. was a member of the Soviet Communist Party’s Central Committee and had signed a letter protesting the awarding of the Prize to Soviet dissident Andrei Sakharov in 1975.

Almost any report of I.P.P.N.W.’s activities in U.S. mainstream media, however positive, had to include some dig at the Soviets, which did not permit independent political groups, including peace groups. In a typical jab at the organization’s “prescriptions” of a test ban, a freeze, a no-first-use pledge, and no weapons in space, the *New Republic* huffed that “the Western doctors do not seem to notice, or perhaps to care, that their East bloc colleagues never take a position contrary to the current Soviet line. ...It has to be so. Not because the American doctors are Soviet agents (they are simply American naïfs), but because the Soviet doctors are.”¹¹⁷

.” The Soviets announced a temporary unilateral test ban in August 1985, had endorsed a mutual nuclear weapons freeze, and had already made a no-first-use pledge. They had recently proposed a ban on space-based weapons and an immediate fifty percent reduction in strategic nuclear arsenals. (The entire U.N. General Assembly, with the exception of the U.S., had voted to exclude the arms race from outer space.) The Reagan Administration had rejected each initiative.

¹¹⁶ John Chamberlain, “What does Nobel Peace Prize amount to?”, *NEW HAVEN REGISTER*, October 28, 1985.

Conn Nugent, I.P.P.N.W.'s executive director, countered that "in all instances, those proposals were put forward by Western doctors before the Soviet government, or any government, endorsed them "We can't retract what we said twelve months ago just because the Soviets agreed to it." Further, he said, "we do not believe that discussion about the arms race can be held hostage to the ideological differences between East and West." A P.S.R. represented that no one was criticizing the substance of the organization's disarmament message.

Dr. Lown replied to these criticisms that "the nuclear arms race is not an exclusively American problem with a unilateral solution."

At the core are U.S./U.S.S.R. relations. Americans and Soviets owe each other and the world a cooperative attempt to increase their knowledge of each other and to focus their common interests on survival. I.P.P.N.W. has been able to do this by adopting a firm policy of avoiding political rhetoric. We concentrate on our shared objectives, and issue our findings in the same form throughout the world. We do not assign blame to one bloc or the other. Doctors throughout the world speak a common language and share common goals that transcend political differences. In the past those bonds have enabled us to collaborate in the elimination of dread diseases like smallpox, and they can serve us now to eliminate the number-one public health threat of our time.¹¹⁸

He also recalled that as a cardiologist he had examined the hearts of many Russians and many Americans, and he could verify that a healthy Russian heart and a healthy American heart sounded exactly the same.¹¹⁹

Though its political results were hard to measure, the effects of the physicians' movement on world perceptions could not be denied. The essential message was not just that nuclear war was not survivable and its consequences untreatable, but that its threat was unacceptable. More important, to quote the slogan of the 1984 conference, "PHYSICIANS INSIST: NUCLEAR WAR CAN BE PREVENTED." Dr. Howard Hiatt, the dean

¹¹⁷ January 1986 issue.

¹¹⁸ From an I.P.P.N.W. fundraising letter dated November 1995.

¹¹⁹ In a speech delivered when he accepted the Beyond War Award to I.P.P.N.W. in January 1985. The meeting in San Francisco was linked by satellite to a similar gathering in Moscow, and each audience could view the event in the other nation via huge video screens erected on the podium of each hall. It was the sixth such link-up ever made between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. Dr. Lown has also been awarded the Cardinal Maderios Peace Medallion, the UNESCO Peace Education Award, and other honors for his disarmament work.

of the Harvard School of Public Health and the man most responsible for bringing the organization's name before the Nobel Committee, noted that "the physicians' campaign has contributed significantly to the social unacceptability of nuclear war fighting rhetoric. And Andreas Papandreou, the prime minister of Greece and an outspoken campaigner for nuclear disarmament, added, "I truly believe that we are now experiencing the awakenings of the peoples of the world on these issues." Dr. Lown countered his own sense of frustration when he told the conference, "In these perilous times, optimism becomes a historic duty."¹²⁰

In early 1985 Drs. Lown and Chazov and six other prominent physician members of I.P.P.N.W. made a five-city tour of U.S. cities to launch their East-West Physicians Campaign to end nuclear weapons testing, comparing the campaign to "a prescription for interrupting the disease process itself." The tour was planned with the knowledge that Presidents Reagan and Gorbachev would be meeting in October to discuss disarmament and other ways to reduce superpower tensions. The physicians had decided to focus on a test ban because it was a simple, readily achievable goal, "thus sidestepping the paralyzing complexity of most other proposals", and because it did not "depend on trust", since it could be verified by seismic means. They felt that it was essential to impede the development of future generations of weapons and that it would strengthen the new Non-Proliferation Treaty. They also wanted to use the issue as "a litmus test for distinguishing those politicians who are committed to ending the arms race from those who tolerate its continuation." And they hoped it would help recover the momentum for a full-scale weapons freeze. They gave lectures, conducted symposia, and made television appearances, starting in Chicago, site of the first sustained nuclear chain reaction. In July they made a similar tour through the Soviet Union. Dr. Lown was deeply disappointed when the Geneva meetings produced accords that included no new moves toward disarmament.

The fifth congress of the I.P.P.N.W. attracted eight hundred physicians from sixty countries to Budapest, Hungary—the first congress held in the Eastern bloc. A new emphasis was placed on the fact that disarmament would liberate resources desperate-

¹²⁰ Bernard Lown, spoken in the general session of the Fourth International Congress of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, Helsinki.

ly needed for third-world development. Dr. Lown noted that worldwide military expenditures continued to climb, and now exceeded the entire income of the less developed nations; that the amounts spent on just one missile program (the Pershing II cruise missiles sited in Europe) could pay for the immunization of all the world's children against preventable communicable diseases; that the amount spent for one nuclear missile could educate 160 million children for a year; that a single year's nuclear weapons expenditures could meet the world's essential food and health needs for twenty years. Weeks after the congress called for a nuclear testing moratorium, the Soviet Union announced the temporary suspension of its testing program. (The United States, however, declined to reciprocate, calling the move a meaningless propaganda gambit.)

On Friday October 11, 1985, Dr. Lown and Dr. Chazov were giving a press conference at U.N. headquarters in Geneva, having met with the director general of the World Health Organization (W.H.O.), "who had solicited our advice on how I.P.P.N.W. could assist W.H.O. in educating the world to the terrible medical consequences of nuclear war."¹²¹ In the midst of the press conference "a man strode forward and asked if he could make a statement." The surprised doctors stepped back, and the man announced that he represented the five-man selection committee for the Nobel Peace Prize and was there to announce that the Committee had selected I.P.P.N.W. as the recipient of the 1985 Prize. "You can imagine the powerful emotional impact: gratification, humility, and above all, a renewed sense of dedication."

The official statement was:

The Norwegian Nobel Committee has decided to award the Nobel Peace Prize for 1985 to the organization International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War. It is the committee's opinion that this organization has performed a considerable service to mankind by spreading authoritative information and by creating an awareness of the catastrophic consequences of atomic warfare. The committee believes that this in turn contributes to an increase in the pressure of public opposition to the proliferation of atomic weapons and to a redefining of priorities, with greater attention being paid to health and other humanitarian issues. Such an awakening of public opinion as is now apparent both in the East and the West, in the North and in the South, can give the present arms limitation negotiations new perspectives and a new seriousness. In this connection, the committee

attaches particular significance to the fact that the organization was formed as a result of the joint initiative by Soviet and American physicians and that it now draws support from physicians in over forty countries all over the world. It is the committee's intention to invite the organization's two founders, who now share the title of president, to receive the Peace Prize on behalf of their organization.

In his Nobel Lecture, Dr. Lown said in part:

Pointing nuclear-tipped missiles at entire nations is an unprecedented act of moral depravity. The horror is obscured by the magnitude, by the sophistication of the means of slaughter, and by the aseptic Orwellian language crafted to describe the attack. ...Paranoid fantasies of a dehumanized adversary cannot withstand the common pursuit of healing and preventing illness. Ultimately, we believe people must come to terms with the fact that the struggle is not between different national destinies, between opposing ideologies, but rather between catastrophe and survival. All nations share a linked destiny; nuclear weapons are their shared enemy.

It was on that high note that Dr. Lown appeared before those assembled in New Haven on April 15, 1986, to receive the Gandhi Peace Prize.

The 1986 Award Ceremony

Dr. Lown and his wife Louise arrived in New Haven by train from Boston at about quarter after one p.m. and went straight to New Haven's Park Plaza hotel, where he gave a press conference that was sparsely attended but which did garner considerable local publicity.

At the press conference, Dr. Lown compared his three-hour meeting with Mikhail Gorbachev in December 1985 with his inability to gain an audience with President Reagan. "I get cynical sometimes when asked about it by colleagues from around the world," he said. "I say I haven't been a leading ball player from some high school team, so it can't be arranged." He said he felt the I.P.P.N.W. had probably had more impact on Soviet policy than on that of his own country, partly because of the lack of U.S. media coverage. Comparing the hours of uncensored time on Soviet television, he said, "The media have been derelict about it." He looked around the room; only

¹²¹ Bernard Lown in an I.P.P.N.W. fundraising letter, 1986.

two reporters were present. “This conference is a good example. If I were in Europe, this room would be full of correspondents.”

When Gorbachev agreed during his meeting with Dr. Lown to allow on-site inspections to verify compliance with disarmament agreements, “I thought we’d scored a goal,” he said. But the Reagan Administration insisted on additional provisions. “Reagan moved the goal posts,” he told the reporters. “How are you going to score a goal when you don’t know where they are?”¹²²

In answer to a question about what kept him going despite the slow progress, he said, “Humanity is our ultimate patient. And our ethical as well as our professional responsibility is to do everything we can to save it.”

After the usual dinner at the hotel, the Award ceremony began shortly after 7:30 at the United Church on the Green. As she had the previous year, Alice Ziegler Frazier welcomed the crowd of several hundred as P.E.P.’s co-director. She then introduced the mayor of New Haven, Biagio DiLieto, who offered some welcoming remarks. The introduction of Dr. Lown was made by Alfred Marder, chair of the Greater New Haven Peace Council; though not a P.E.P. Board member, he had been the one to nominate Dr. Lown for the Award and had assembled abundant supporting documentation.

The actual presentation was made by Dr. Martin Cherniack, P.E.P.’s president and an officer of the Public Health Service in Cincinnati; Dr. Lown was a public health professor at Harvard. In his address, Dr. Cherniack noted that this was “the third time in the past six years that Promoting Enduring Peace has given its annual award to a physician instrumental in organizing Physicians for Social Responsibility.”¹²³ He deplored the turn away during the Reagan years from past efforts at U.S.-Soviet dialogue toward “assured, unreasoning, mendacious, and insolent” ideological rhetoric and “a program of no new treaties, endless nuclear testing, the militarization of space... in two words: nuclear domination. Only one society appears to be waging this arms race.” In this new mindset Dr. Cherniack saw “a preview of the barbarian

¹²² Joseph T. Brady, “Anti-nuclear Nobel winner draws Soviet nod, Reagan snub”, *NEW HAVEN REGISTER*, April 16, 1986.

¹²³ The others were Helen Caldicott in 1980 and Robert Jay Lifton in 1982. The only other physician to have received the Award was Benjamin Spock in 1968.

mind that would arise in the milieu of irradiated dust,” symptom of a spiritual disease generated by the long and poisonous contemplation of what it is to be both the perpetrators and the victims of ultimate destruction. He hailed Dr. Lown for his “good old-fashioned American virtues” in a time of counterfeit patriotism such as “a combative and practical rationalism”, “achievement based on talent in medicine and science”, and “the compatibility between individual determination and socially positive effect.”

The inscription¹²⁴ on the framed citation read:

In recognition of your lifetime devotion to the cause of peace and the improvement of human life, through your work as an esteemed cardiologist and social activist.

It is uncommon for a person to achieve international renown in two different fields. It is still more rare when these accomplishments are accorded recognition and respect from both professional colleagues and the general public. It is most unusual and also most fortunate when these activities include the humane use of technology for individual ends, medical therapeutics, and an opposition to the use of technology for its most socially destructive end, the development of nuclear weaponry.

Your leadership in organizing Physicians for Social Responsibility and International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War has resonated through a federation of national affiliates, representing over 135,000 doctors in forty-one countries. Such rapid growth is testimony to universal ethics and interest in survival that transcend differences between states and economic systems.

In your thoughts, words, and deeds you have demonstrated the highest traditions of Gandhi towards the goal of a more peaceful world. We are pleased to honor a Nobel Peace Prize recipient, who is also one of his country's most eminent physicians.

Presented on the fifteenth day of April, 1986

PROMOTING ENDURING PEACE

Martin Cherniack, M.D. / President

¹²⁴ Another record for wordiness, this inscription was almost twice as long as the previous year's and seven times longer early inscriptions. As of 1996, no citation has ever come close.

After accepting the citation and the bronze Award metal, Dr. Lown placed a metronome on the pulpit and, to the tick-tock beat, spoke of the need for action as time ran out for humanity. Alice Ziegler Frazier wrote to him afterward, “The heartbeat tempo of the metronome, with your drama of audible seconds, each containing a message of unmet human needs, echoed from the pulpit of this historic New England church and the spirit of its timely message touched the hearts of your listeners. . . . Your dose of chilling arms race facts carefully balanced with the uplifting thoughts of poets and sages provided both realism and hope for a positive prognosis.”

Though no record survives in P.E.P.’s files of Dr. Lown’s specific remarks, they may have previewed his remarks to the I.P.P.N.W.’s upcoming sixth congress, held in Cologne that summer, where he said:

Borders and frontiers are but primitive tribal scars. Acid rain and atomic radiation do not need passports to travel the world. Nuclear winter will respect no bounds. These truths are now being learned by millions. They are the seeds planted in the springtime of the atomic age. They will grow and ripen to create a new world culture that respects the fragile and indissoluble unity of the human family—a truth not foreign to us in the healing arts.

Brooding over the nuclear threat for a quarter-century now, I am led inexorably to the conviction that without exciting moral outrage among their intended victims, the dismantling of nuclear weapons will not succeed. Only the unprecedented arousal of moral revulsion will provide the necessary spiritual energy.

Let us rekindle our indignation at the moral obscenity of the politics of nuclearism. And let that rekindling fire a great people’s movement for which future generations will pay homage to this generation.¹²⁵

After the Award

Dr. Lown wrote to Alice and Howard a month later, “I will long continue to recall with pleasure the Gandhi Award ceremony, a significant event made more memorable because of the deeply committed people whom I met.” Referring to a comment Alice had made in her thank-you letter about “burnt-out activists,” he responded:

“Burn-out is not a permissible emotion when the option is to burn. The struggle in which we are engaged is unprecedented historically and therefore complex and extraordinarily demanding. What provides endless hope is that the majority of humankind, whether or not they know it, is on our side because everyone is

committed to life. We must draw strength from the enormous magnitude of our potential allies. I am sure we will mobilize millions before long. The final epidemic is not preordained in the stars. What human beings create, human beings can and will control.

Howard Frazier invited Dr. Lown to join the Volga Peace Cruise in the summer of 1986, but Dr. Lown declined because of his "extremely overcommitted schedule" since winning the Nobel.

In 1986, when "Star Wars" was threatening to turn space into a platform for nuclear weapons, he proposed an antidote: a satellite-based global health communications system as a means of demonstrating that space can unite rather than further divide humankind. SatelLife, like I.P.P.N.W. itself an international not-for-profit organization, makes use of satellite, telephone, and radio networking technology to serve the health communication and information needs of countries in the developing world. SatelLife's mission is to improve communications and exchanges of information in the fields of public health, medicine and the environment. A special emphasis is placed on areas of the world where access is limited by poor communications, economic conditions, or disasters.

Attendance at the 1987 congress in Moscow was some two thousand, representing over 175 thousand physicians; they were the fastest-growing medical organization in the world. Attendance at the Montreal congress in 1988 increased to twenty-five hundred, representing nearly eighty countries. That year the Soviet Union resumed bomb testing, after three years of its unilateral moratorium, triggering protests from I.P.P.N.W. affiliates as part of the organization's new Cease-Fire Campaign. Congress attendance in 1989 reached three thousand; the event was held in both Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Between 1989 and the end of his term as president of I.P.P.N.W. in 1993, as the Cold War (and the Soviet Union) came to an end, participation in I.P.P.N.W. declined. I.P.P.N.W. nonetheless kept up its pressure to reduce the nuclear danger, provided medical relief to areas in the former Soviet Union experiencing shortages related to the collapse of the nation, and helped achieve a world ban on the dumping of nu-

¹²⁵ Excerpts published via the Internet at www.web.apc.org/~pgs/blown.html as of 1992.

clear and industrial waste at sea and an extension of the worldwide nuclear testing moratorium.

During the U.S. war against Iraq in 1991 the organization fielded investigators who discovered and publicized the horrible health effects of the destruction of the Iraqi infrastructure, and coordinated the distribution of tons of medical relief supplies. I.P.P.N.W. acquired N.G.O. status with the U.N. and W.H.O., giving it a forum at each. In 1992 the organization launched the World Court Project along with the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms to bring the issue of the legality of nuclear weapons before the World Court. And in 1993 I.P.P.N.W. successfully spurred W.H.O. into petitioning the World Court for a ruling on that issue. The organization's primary project now is Abolition 2000, the goal of which is a world free of nuclear weapons by the end of the century.

He received an honorary doctorate of science from Bowdoin College in 1988. In 1992 he wrote an article about Joseph Rotblat titled "A Hero of the Atomic Age", with no way to know that three years later Rosblatt would stand where he had stood receiving the Nobel Peace Prize.¹²⁶ In 1995 he wrote, "We shrink in horror at the bestialities unleashed in Bosnia, Rwanda and Chechnya but these pale compared with the human savagery stored in nuclear weapons."¹²⁷

His dream of a comprehensive test ban has still not been realized. Although a treaty to ban all nuclear explosive tests was signed in 1996 by most nations, it did not ban testing by simulation and non-nuclear explosive testing, and it was not signed by a number of nations, including semi-nuclear powers such as India, primarily because it did not commit the nuclear powers to a definite plan for the destruction of their nuclear stockpiles. Among those powers, the United States is the most resistant to giving up its nuclear dominance.

As of 1996, at the age of seventy-four, Dr. Lown runs the Lown Cardiovascular Group in Brookline, Massachusetts. He is still very active with SatelLife, which has numerous programs in the developing world. Recently on a visit to Africa he was asked to sum up his philosophy. He responded, "Ignorance fosters chaos."

¹²⁶ THE PSR QUARTERLY, December 1992, Volume 2, Number 4.

¹²⁷ BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, 1995

Chapter Twenty-two

1986-87: The Philosopher-Peacemaker—John Somerville

It was the United Nations International Year of Peace when nominations for the Award were solicited in June 1986, and the world's nations were still spending over \$1.7 million per minute on armaments. The effects of the massively expensive Reagan military build-up were becoming evident. That year the United States, having for decades been the world's number-one creditor, joined the list of debtor nations (all of the rest of which were third-world countries). The homeless problem became a crisis, increasing from three hundred thousand to three million during Reagan's term. The percentage of Americans below the poverty line increased to fourteen percent of the population. In a single year over one million families were refused medical care for financial reasons. Infant mortality in urban areas rose to third world levels. The richest half percent of Americans had increased their share of the nation's wealth from twenty-five to thirty-five percent. And so on.¹²⁸

Presidents Reagan and Gorbachev agreed in late 1986 to a ban on medium- and shorter-range missiles, the first ever agreement to reduce nuclear arsenals, with extensive on-site inspections. But Reagan turns away Soviet initiatives that would end nuclear testing, reduce strategic stockpiles, and stop the "Star Wars" defense system. Nukes were bad news in every way: the greatest nuclear power disaster in history happened in April 1986 when the Chernobyl power plant in the Ukraine explodes, rendering vast tracts of land uninhabitable for thousands of years; the eventual death toll was estimated at over forty thousand.

Against this backdrop, P.E.P. Board members chose among eight nominees for the Award—all but one connected to the disarmament crusade. The first on the alphabetical list was George Byer, who finally made the list after two years of nominating himself for trying to start Friendship Week. Next was Admiral Gene LaRocque of the Center for Defense Information, his third nomination for his work in sounding a military voice for more rational military policies; he had also been a principal speaker

¹²⁸ Source: Ruth Leger Sivard, *World Military and Social Expenditures, 1986* (Washington D.C.: World Priorities).

aboard P.E.P.'s Mississippi Peace Cruise that summer. A new candidate was John Looney, an A.F.S.C. organizer for the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign in Ohio. The fourth nominee was the third organization ever to be nominated, the Maryknoll Order of priests and nuns, which was doing courageous work on the front lines in Central America.

Next was Robert Mueller, the recently retired head of the United Nations' development efforts, who had just become Chancellor of the University for Peace in Costa Rica. Another nominee was the Reverend Stephen Shick, the founding director of the Unitarian Universalist Peace Network and a long-time staffer at SANE. Next was Dr. John Somerville, author of *The Philosophy of Peace* and peace activist (see below), who had been nominated in 1981, 1983, 1984, and 1985. The last name on the list was Bishop C. Dale White of the New York area of the United Methodist Church and author of the Methodists' pastoral letter "In Defense of Creation" calling for the elimination of nuclear weapons. (Howard and Alice Frazier were again nominated—twice—and again declined.)

The tally showed that Admiral LaRocque received the most points in the voting, followed by John Somerville and the Maryknoll Order.

Because Admiral LaRocque elected to decline the Award, as he did many others, the Award would go to John Somerville. Howard Frazier notified him at the end of October, and proposed a date the following spring; Friday April 24th was agreed upon.

John Somerville

Despite Plato's advocating that society be run by philosopher-kings, philosophers have not been noted for their concern with public affairs. A notable exception is John Somerville. Professor emeritus of the City University of New York, he was a philosopher's philosopher—teacher of decades of future philosophers, organizer and participant in philosophy conferences throughout the world, author of ten books and numerous articles, many of which have been translated into all major languages and are used as study materials in many countries.

Born in 1905, he grew up in a poor Manhattan neighborhood. "There was never enough money in the family; we were always on the edge," he recalled in 1987. He

worked to supplement the family income in jobs such as newspaper copy boy and strawberry picker, taking a bite for himself when he could (“I assure you, the biggest strawberries never made it to market”). His tough New York youth in the ’twenties and ’thirties turned his mind toward philosophy; “the Depression made everyone think about basic problems,” he recalled.¹²⁹

He received all his degrees, including his doctorate in philosophy, from Columbia. Starting in 1929 he taught at Hunter College of the City University of New York for nineteen years, then left when he secured a position at Stanford, hoping to fulfill a life-long dream of moving to California. That dream was set back when his visiting professorship was not renewed after just one year. He returned to City University and taught there for another fifteen years, California dreaming the whole time. “New York is not one of my favorite places,” he said in 1986, having spent nearly his whole life between the Hudson and East Rivers. At the age of sixty two, in 1967, he secured a position with California Western University, now called United States International University, and his wife began teaching sociology at San Diego State. They taught there until their retirement, and made California their permanent home.

For Dr. Somerville, the search for truth led into the world of human affairs, not away from it. He didn’t view philosophy as “an institution of abstract knowledge,” but rather a social and political philosophy with practical implications, as ancients such as Plato and Socrates did. “They were all head over heels in social problems,” he reflected in 1987. His academic role of teaching and research led him to action in the peace movement.

When in 1945 he learned about the bombing of Hiroshima, “at first I thought, ‘This is wonderful’, so I rejoiced.” As the facts became available and he considered the full implications, his rejoicing turned to horror. The World War II alliance with the U.S.S.R. and its post-war reversal focused his attention on their world view, and in 1946 he published *Soviet Philosophy: A Study of Theory and Practice*. As the new bipolar world emerged, the subject of peace, atomic war, and what it means gripped him, and

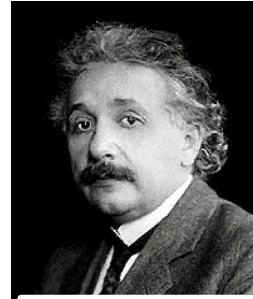
¹²⁹ Steve Padilla, “He Preaches the Peace of Understanding”, The San Diego Union, April 23, 1987, pp. B-1, B-9.

in 1949 he published what is now considered a classic, *The Philosophy of Peace*. Albert Einstein read the book and wrote him in a letter¹³⁰ dated May 18, 1950:

Dear Mr. Somerville,

I have read more than half of your book "The Philosophy of Peace" which you so kindly sent me, with great satisfaction. It is not only a careful analysis of the relevant moral and historical factors but a sign of remarkable independence and courage. If your work should find the attention in this country it merits it would counteract effectively the present state of hysterical fear and would lead to a more sane and constructive political attitude.

With many thanks,
yours sincerely,
A. Einstein



His love of learning and teaching inspired his 1954 book *The Enjoyment of Study in School or On Your Own*. Nine years later he published *Social and Political Philosophy: Readings from Plato to Gandhi*, which he edited with P.E.P. Board member Ronald Santoni.

As the rise of the New Left revived American interest in Marxism, he published *The Philosophy of Marxism* in 1967 (revised in 1981). Four years later he edited *Radical Currents In Contemporary Philosophy* and contributed a chapter on Marxist ideology to it; other contributors included Howard Parsons and Ed D'Angelo, who would later be active in his disarmament organizations. He prepared *Dialogues on the Philosophy of Marxism*, from the proceedings of the Society for the Philosophical Study of Dialectical Materialism, in 1974.

As his interest in the world peace movement strengthened, he wrote *The Peace Revolution: Ethos and Social Process* in 1975. It was called "one of the most important books of our time" by *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* and was "strongly recommended as a peace consciousness raiser" by the *Library Journal*. "No apocalypticist has ever pictured a more dreadful hell than the hell on earth the author describes as following in the wake of an all-out nuclear war" was the comment of *Social Science*, and *Science and Society* added, "Everyone who wants to survive ought to read and heed it."

¹³⁰ Dr. Einstein apparently typed it himself; there were three strike-overs.

The opus nearest in time to his Gandhi Peace Award was his *Soviet Marxism and Nuclear War* (1981) which supplied a missing link in American peace efforts—an examination, first-hand and in-depth, of Soviet nuclear warfare policy. Drawing on the proceedings of the colloquium he chaired at the 1981 World Congress of Philosophy, he presented the first open debate on nuclear war ever held among leading Marxists.

Beyond academic works, he wrote poetry and plays when they were the right medium to explore the message of peace. His 1976 play *The Crisis: The True Story About How The World Almost Ended, A Play In Four Acts*, is “a docudrama about how President Kennedy took us over the brink in tempting nuclear conflict with the Soviets,” said one professor who used the play in his classes as a teaching tool long before he met its author. Based on Robert Kennedy’s inside account of the Cuban Missile in 1962, it has been produced in leading theatres of Sweden and Japan, and is still assigned to college students.

He was awarded an honorary doctor of human letters degree from Denison University. As his commitment to peace crossed over from the academic to the practical, he was an author-participant in three UNESCO projects to strengthen world peace.

As Bernard Lown [GPA '85-86] served as a bridge between the world’s physicians and the crusade for nuclear disarmament, so Dr. Somerville was for philosophers. In 1978 he co-founded the Union of American and Japanese Professionals Against Nuclear Omnicide (U.A.J.P.A.N.O.) and served as its first president. By 1981 he was a leader of the Mobilization for Survival, and represented it at the World Conference on Nuclear Weapons in 1981. Then at the 1983 World Congress of Philosophy he became founding president of International Philosophers for the Prevention of Nuclear Omnicide (I.P.P.N.O.), which brought together thousands of the world’s philosophers, scholars, and teachers in concerted action to promote nuclear disarmament. I.P.P.N.O.’s vice-president was Dr. Ronald Santoni, an accomplished philosopher himself and a Board member of P.E.P. His long-time friend-in-philosophy Howard Parsons was the U.S. representative on the I.P.P.N.O. International Organizing Committee.

I.P.P.N.O.’s conferences and publications have been described as “international dialogues at the philosophical level between representative thinkers of the main groups

of nations in today's world—the NATO group, the Warsaw Pact, and the third world—to find the common ground, the agreed principles, and the agreed methods to effectively prevent nuclear omnicide and promote the process of universal disarmament.” To assure that their international dialogue was relevant to each side of the bipolar power system, the organization had two co-equal headquarters, one in the U.S. and one in the U.S.S.R. International conferences were rotated among the “three worlds”—the U.S.-European, Soviet, and underdeveloped regions.

As the arms race became increasingly frightening after the election of Ronald Reagan, he initiated the California Campaign for No-First-Use of Nuclear Weapons. The objective was to pass a referendum initiative that would mandate the governor of California to press the President to publicly declare that the United States would never be the first to use nuclear weapons—as the Soviet Union had already done. (Jerry Brown, California's governor from 1975-83, supported the initiative.) To get the question on the ballot, the signatures of five hundred thousand Californians were needed.

He expanded the effort in the spring of 1984 into the National Campaign for a Policy of No-First-Use of Nuclear Weapons and became its chairperson. The honorary chairperson was Dr. Linus Pauling [GPA '62]. P.E.P. Board member Milton Lowenthal was on the executive committee. (Lowenthal was also chairman of the Central Pennsylvania chapter of U.A.J.P.A.N.O..) The no-first-use demand was endorsed by nearly five hundred members of the National Academy of Sciences, fifty members of Congress, and forty Nobel Laureates.

Dr. Somerville was struck by the incongruity between what the American people believed—four out of five thought the United States had always pledged never to be the first to launch a nuclear strike—and what was true. Despite the Reagan campaign rhetoric that “nuclear war cannot be won and must not be fought,” U.S. military planners would not reciprocate the Soviet pledge, on the basis that Soviet superiority in conventional weapons on the European continent could only be checked by the nuclear threat. Consequently a substantial amount of nuclear planning and development was designed to defend Europe from a possible Soviet invasion. Yet a group of former Kennedy-Johnson Administration defense leaders—Robert McNamara, McGeorge Bundy, George Kennan, and Gerard Smith (later joined by Morton

Halperin and others)—published research that demonstrated that a no-first-strike pledge would increase European security by minimizing the chance of an irrational initiation of nuclear war. They traced the pro-first-use policy to “an antiquated security guarantee” to Western Europe that was made at a time when the United States had the nuclear monopoly.¹³¹

A few years previously, in 1981, he had received the Institute for World Order’s Wallach Award, more than anything else for a word. “It was Somerville who coined the word and developed the concept of ‘omnicide’ in relation to nuclear warfare,” read the award inscription. His first published use of the term was in “Human Rights and Nuclear War”, an article in the January 1982 issue of *The Churchman*. His 1983 article “Nuclear War is Omnicide” became one of P.E.P.’s most requested items of literature.

As a philosopher with a professional interest in precise language, Dr. Somerville found the terms used to speak and think about the use of nuclear weapons to be essentially meaningless—an inappropriate and even violent use of language. Nuclear exchange, nuclear conflict, nuclear war, nuclear holocaust—the first term has a harmless sound, like “student exchange”; “conflict” sounds like an argument, perhaps even fisticuffs; “war” evokes the rockets’ red glare and bombs bursting in air; even “holocaust” suggests huge swaths of ghastly destruction within an otherwise intact world.

Dr. Somerville asserted that such terms are “inaccurate and misleading for the simple reason that what we’ve always called “war” is survivable by most of the human race. No matter how destructive a war was, you could always count on the fact that most of the human race would still be alive, and the planet would still be livable.” The word “war” implies “post-war”, which implies a period of picking up the pieces by the winners and losers after the shooting stops. It can be “limited” and it can be “winnable”. It implies a purpose, such as conquest, defense, or independence. It can even imply “just” as in a “just war” against the Nazis. But there would likely be nothing left after the devastation, contamination, and nuclear winter that would follow the detonation of even a fraction of the superpowers’ arsenals. “It cannot be limited and it cannot be won. “How can you win it and have anything left?” he asked rhetorically. “How

¹³¹ Susan Subak, “No-First-Use Debate”, NUCLEAR TIMES, March-April 1986.

can you limit it when you don't have the cooperation of the other side? The Soviets say, 'Would *you* limit it if *we* started it? Would *we* limit it if *you* started it? Of course not.' And "how can any war that destroys all humankind be *just*?"

Each side possessed tens of thousands of bombs (and still does as of 1996). Each one is packed with many megatons of explosive power. If a ten-*kiloton* bomb—"the Tin Lizzy model of atomic weaponry" in Dr. Somerville's words—could destroy a medium-size city such as Hiroshima; and if a one-*megaton* bomb could overstress the medical resources of the entire United States, as Dr. Bernard Lown [GPA '85-86] showed in his landmark 1962 study; what would be the result of the accidental or intentional detonation of just twenty percent of both superpowers' stockpiles? Dr. Somerville coined a term for it: *omnicide*—the annihilation of all life. The world does not face nuclear war; it faces **nuclear omnicide**.

"The concept of species annihilation means a relatively swift (on the scale of civilization), deliberately induced end to history, culture, science, biological reproduction and memory", according to one explanation of Dr. Somerville's term. "It is the ultimate human rejection of the gift of life, an act which requires a new word to describe it, namely omnicide. It is more akin to suicide or murder than to a natural death process. It is very difficult to comprehend omnicide, but it may be possible to discern the preparations for omnicide and prevent its happening. ... Should the public discover the true health cost of nuclear pollution, a cry would rise from all parts of the world and people would refuse to cooperate passively with their own death."

Paul Allen, a professor of philosophy who is active in I.P.P.N.O., described Dr. Somerville in 1986 as "an extremely sensitive and kind fellow—very human, very dear, with a wonderful sense of humor. He loves to joke. He doesn't have a chip on his shoulder—never dogmatic or burdened with the weight of his task. He's very alive, jolly all the time, full of love and good cheer. He is what he believes. More than any man I know, he is a man of peace."

What really riled him was the two-faced policy of his government. Reagan conveyed the impression that he did not support the concept of limited, winnable nuclear war during the 1984 Presidential campaigns, said Dr. Somerville. "I'm sad to say, the impression he conveyed is not what he truly believes."

Howard Frazier said shortly after Dr. Somerville accepted the Award, “he has worked harder than anyone I know to save the world from nuclear disaster. I’ve got to take my hat off to a person who works like the devil, with no pay, to save the earth—literally.”

In the years before he received the Award, the “retired” professor was always on the move, journeying to meetings, conferences, and lectures in the United States, Europe, and the Soviet Union to advance the causes of no-first-use and disarmament. His essential message was the same everywhere: “As a culture we must learn to resist nuclear weapons—to brand them as intolerable.”¹³²

Dr. Somerville, eighty-two when he received the Award, was a familiar personage to a number of P.E.P. Board members because of his prominent presence at major peace conferences, his contribution of several articles to the list of P.E.P. reprints, and his participation in P.E.P.’s epic Mississippi Peace Cruise in 1986, for which he was a featured speaker. Milton Lowenthal, who was also on the cruise, said afterward:

Dr. Somerville’s dedication to nonviolence is well stated in his presentation message for a gift... to the Soviet Peace Committee after the Mississippi Peace Cruise. The message concludes, “The [gift] symbolizes and expresses the deep and lasting bond that must always unite us. This bond, though born in sorrow, lives in love, and grows in hope. It is expressed in your two beautiful words, *mir* and *druzba*—Peace and Friendship.

The 1987 Award Ceremony

For the first time since the event moved to New Haven in 1979, a private dinner was not held with the guest of honor and the Board. Instead, a public dinner was planned as an integral part of the program. The price of the evening rose from free to ten dollars a plate (the exact cost levied by the caterer). To accommodate the dinner, the event was moved to the United Church on the Green Parish House at 323 Temple Street in New Haven, into a cavernous room called the Great Hall.¹³³

¹³² Mike Granberry, “Octogenarian Coined ‘Omnicide’ During Lifelong Push for Peace”, LOS ANGELES TIMES, Sunday November 30, 1986.

¹³³ The Gandhi Peace Award ceremony was not the only honors event of significance to P.E.P. people that month. On April 2nd P.E.P. Board member Bruce Martin, A.F.S.C. field staff in Connecticut, received the Willard Uphaus Peace and Justice Award from P.E.P. Board member Paul Hodel’s Peace and Justice Action Center. The two events, both catered

Congratulatory messages came from many of Dr. Somerville's associations, such as the telegram from Ben Sanders, director of Information and Studies Branch of the United Nations Disarmament Affairs department.

The Rev. Alice "Allie" Perry, P.E.P. Board member and assistant minister of the church, gave the invocation. The City of New Haven was again represented, this year by Tom Holohan, a member of the Board of Alders and chairman of the city's Peace Commission. Dr. Eleanor "Ellie" Daubek Hamilton performed some songs with guitar. Milton Lowenthal, the Board member who had so persistently nominated Dr. Somerville for the Gandhi Peace Award, made the introduction.

Martin Cherniack presented the Award. The framed citation was artfully prepared by Martha Link Walsh with beautifully intricate papercutting of grapes and grape vines. The text, written by Howard and Martin, read:

In recognition of your lifetime devotion to peace and human rights, you have maintained a healthy suspicion of governments with a deep love of society.

You were among the first to articulate a vocabulary for the total nihilism of nuclear weapons and nuclear war and have institutionalized your ideas with a talent for organization, as a co-founder and American President of the Union of American and Japanese Professionals Against Nuclear Omnicide, as founder and President of the International Philosophers for the Prevention of Nuclear Omnicide, as Chairperson of the National Campaign for a Policy of No-First-Use of Nuclear Weapons, which has been endorsed by 500 members of the National Academy of Sciences, 50 members of Congress, and 40 Nobel Laureates, and as philosopher, playwright, and educator, you have been a beacon for the continuation of the human condition and for its betterment.

In words, both spoken and written, in ideas and in actions, you have demonstrated the highest traditions of Gandhi towards the goal of a more peaceful world.

Presented on the twenty-fourth of April, 1987

dinners, were publicized in conjunction with one another. The guest speaker was David Cortright, executive director for the national SANE organization, who later married P.E.P.'s sec-

PROMOTING ENDURING PEACE

*Martin Cherniack, MD, MPH / President*¹³⁴

Dr. Somerville spoke about “Our Enemy and Gandhi’s Legacy”. As a philosopher of peace, he was extremely well versed in Gandhi’s thought, and contrasted the Mahatma’s message with the Cold War rhetoric that absolutely demonized our partners in the bipolar balance of nuclear terror.

The evening was concluded with a benediction by the Rev. Cleveland Thornhill, the African-American minister in the area most active in international peace issues.

On the literature table in the back of the hall, along with reprints of articles by Dr. Somerville and others, was a small blue brochure entitled “No-First-Use Campaign”, the issue on which Dr. Somerville concentrated his attention for the next several years. To date, the United States has never renounced the right to be the first to use nuclear weapons, and maintains a policy of “extending” its conventional strength through the use of the nuclear threat against non-nuclear nations such as Iraq and North Korea.

After the Award

Dr. Somerville returned to California, where he and his wife lived in a small house in the El Cajon valley near San Diego surrounded by cactus, rocks, and orange groves and filled with books, magazines, and knickknacks collected in their world travels. In his mid-nineties, he continues his interest in the groups he founded, I.P.P.N.O. and U.A.J.P.A.N.O, and the National No-First-Use Campaign.

retary Karen Jacob, whom he met during a Mississippi Peace Cruise.

¹³⁴ The encouraging trend of mixing one’s life as a peace activist with one’s profession and using the latter to make the former more effective, begun by Physicians for Social Responsibility, was strengthened by the organizations Dr. Somerville founded. An indirect indication may be found in the signature of Martin Cherniack at the bottom of his citation. When he signed an Award citation the first time in 1984, for Kay Camp, it was simply his name. His signature on Dr. Bernard Lown’s citation in 1986 was followed by his MD designation. For Dr. Somerville’s he used his full professional designation of MD, MPH (public health).

Chapter Twenty-three

1988-89: The Spirit of Gandhi In America—César Chávez

For the entire history of Promoting Enduring Peace, the primary threat to peace, and to life itself, had arisen from the superpower conflict called the Cold War. Two great nations had poured their treasure into preparations to annihilate each other and take the human race down with them. The population of each superpower had been thoroughly victimized by the costs and social controls demanded by this “long twilight struggle”. The energy transfer between the two poles of this system of terror was almost entirely negative, in the form of hostility, fear, mistrust, and combat by proxy.

It was the mission of the groups that constituted the American peace movement, prominent among them Promoting Enduring Peace, to make positive connections, however tenuous, based on information and interchanges that could counter and to some extent supplant the otherwise negative superpower connection. The motivations were four.

First, peace activists were those who took most seriously the reality that a superpower conflict unrestrained by voices for nonviolence could well bring on the ultimate catastrophe—what John Somerville named “omnicide”. They chose to respond proactively rather than “wait for the Bomb” as most of their fellow citizens were resigned to do. Second, they saw no reason why the world’s treasure should be wasted on weaponry and malevolence, when a harmonious and prosperous world was within reach. Third, many of them believed that the socialist experiment begun in 1917—and carried on since by peoples striving to liberate themselves and move the world forward—was not after all a tyrannical threat to human civilization, and, for all its flaws, might well have some valuable lessons to teach the established socioeconomic system.

Finally, many of them were drawn to experience the truth of what Jerome Davis often wrote when autographing his books: “I have always found that adventuring for peace and justice is the greatest fun in life.” The adventure of building bridges across chasms of hostility, of making dear friends of supposed enemies, of standing against the militarist powers-that-be and winning occasional small victories, year after year, against overwhelming odds—it was a wonderful way to experience being alive.

In 1988 and 1989 the basis of that peacemaking mission—the bipolar world system—essentially came to an end when the Soviets could no longer sustain their side of the burden and, unlike their partner in the tango of terror, had insufficient credit to stay in the game. With its economy in free fall, the Soviet Union lost its ability to project a meaningful military threat as it withdrew from its mini-Nam in Afghanistan. With that loss, the lid was off the nationalism in the republics absorbed after World War II; it boiled over and dissolved the union itself. The Communist parties associated with the U.S.S.R. lost their turf, the petty tyrannies and oppressive systems many of them maintained were swept aside, the capitalist wolf was invited in for dinner, the world's largest McDonalds opened in Beijing, and the end of history was declared.

For three decades P.E.P. had presented the Gandhi Peace Award to individuals who had led the struggle for international reconciliation between the two great power blocs. The only exception had been the Award in 1978 to the founder and director of Amnesty International, but even there the underlying achievement had been the transcendence of national interests and sectarianism to attain the higher sense of justice and liberty on which an enduring peace would have to be based. Now, with the U.S.-Soviet face-off about to fade into history, the attention of progressives turned to other struggles.

In 1989, for the first time, the Award was presented to the leader of a cause other than disarmament and U.S.-Soviet reconciliation—the man who most represented the living spirit of Gandhi in America. It would be seven years before the Award winner would again be someone distinguished for work on behalf of nuclear disarmament and global peace.

As in the 1986 selection, Board members were asked to choose from a list of eight nominees that Howard Frazier sent out at the end of September 1987. First on the list again was the self-nominated George Byer. Second was César Chávez, founder and leader of the United Farm Workers of America (U.F.W.A.). Third was Prof. Stephen Cohen, an author and a columnist for *THE NATION*. Fourth was David Cortright, executive director of SANE/Freeze, a leader of the G.I. peace movement during the Vietnam era, and a participant in P.E.P.'s Mississippi Peace Cruise.

Next on the list was Rep. Ron Dellums, the African-American Congressman from California who was one of the strongest advocates for conversion from military to social priorities, an opponent of U.S. intervention in Central America, the architect of the trade embargo of South Africa, a civil rights activist, and a leader of the Congressional Black Caucus. The fifth nominee was Sanford Gottlieb, the former director of SANE, a full-time peace activist and author, and most recently the senior analyst at Admiral LaRocque's Center for Defense Information. Sixth was Sen. Daniel Inouye, nominated primarily for investigating the Iran-Contra affair, but also a key figure in the Senate Watergate hearings.

The seventh nominee was Coretta Scott King, who had carried on her murdered husband's leadership in the civil rights and peace movements as the director of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Center for Nonviolent Social Change and a leader of WILPF and Women Strike for Peace. The last name on the list was a television producer named Tony Verna, who had co-produced and directed the "Live Aid" rock benefit for African famine relief and most recently had produced a live broadcast of the Pope saying the Rosary for world peace that was beamed to a worldwide "congregation" in forty countries.

By November the votes were in, and there was a virtual tie between Ron Dellums, who led by a single point, and César Chávez. (Coretta Scott King and David Cortright were next.) Arrangements could not be made with Rep. Dellums, so the next Award recipient would be César Chávez. As founder of the United Farmworkers of America, he was the first advocate of a domestic cause and the only Hispanic American ever to be chosen for the Award.

Howard wrote to him in February of 1988 that he was being invited to accept the Award,

because you are the founder and leader of the United Farm Workers of America and in this capacity you have tirelessly worked to end the gross exploitation of farmworkers and you have done so in the tradition of Gandhi's nonviolent philosophy. Your dedicated work has brought a better life and justice to the long-neglected segment of our farmworkers community, though many obstacles have been put in your way and continue so. You have shown by your personal exam-

ple the necessity of farmworkers developing power to control their own destiny and that “the work for social change and against social justice is never ended.”

Howard also mentioned that, though the Award presentation was normally not a fundraising event, “an exception would be made because we know the U.F.W.A. is in need of funds.” Mr. Chávez accepted; all that remained was to set the date.

It wasn't easy. The preferred month for Award ceremonies was October or early November, and so the date of October 7, 1988, was agreed upon. Howard and Alice made plans for a dinner event similar to the one the previous year, with the New Haven area's newly arrived bishop, Peter Rosazza, making the presentation. As the date neared, however, Mr. Chávez was undergoing a deep spiritual turmoil. On July 19th he issued a statement:

A powerful urge has been raging within me for several months. I have been struggling against it. Towards the end of last week, the urge became insistent. I resisted again, but my efforts were in vain. It was at that time that I resolved, with God's help, to go on an unconditional water-only fast, commencing at midnight, Saturday, July 16, 1988.

The statement said that the fast was inspired partly by the “terrible suffering of the farmworkers and their children, the crushing of farmworkers' rights, the denial of free and fair elections, and the death of good-faith collective bargaining in California agriculture.” The U.F.W.A. had just lost a key case in Arizona and had been ordered to pay the enormous sum of \$5.4 million to a supermarket chain; and California's state government, now in the hands of the growers, had moved against the farmworkers. The statement continued:

This fast is first and foremost personal. It is something I feel compelled to do. It is directed at myself. It is a fast for the purification of my own body, mind, and soul. The fast is also the heartfelt prayer for purification and strengthening for all of us, for myself, and for all of those who work beside me in the farmworkers' movement, whatever the work we do. It is a fervent prayer that together we will confront and resist, with all of our strength, the scourge of poison that threatens our people, our land, and our food.

He recalled the suffering of the poisoned farmworkers and their children and asked, “Do we feel their pain enough? I know I don't and I'm ashamed.” He made

reference to the fact that some U.F.W. supporters were no longer carrying on the grape boycott:

The fast is also an act of penance for those in a position of moral authority and for all men and women activists who know what is right and just, who know that they could or should do more, who have become bystanders and thus collaborators with an industry that does not care about its workers. How can we face the enormity of this corporate sin that threatens its people?

He reviewed the ugly facts about the effects of the common pesticides that saturate most supermarket produce:

The evil is far greater than I had thought it to be; it threatens to choke out the life of our people, and also the life systems that support us all. It will not be eradicated by more studies or legislative hearing or executive power. It will take our combined energy and influence in the marketplace to change the cycle of poisons and destruction and death that threaten our people and our world.

The solution to this deadly crisis will not be found in the arrogance of the powerful, but in solidarity with the weak and the helpless. I pray to God that this fast will be a preparation for a multitude of simple deeds for justice carried out by men and women whose hearts are focused on the suffering of the poor and who yearn with us for a better world. Together all things are possible!

Mr. Chávez's grueling fast dragged on through the summer heat, as he thinned and weakened—a week, two weeks, three, four, five weeks without sustenance of any kind. At last, on August 21st, he took some soup and ended the ordeal.

Howard sent greetings and encouragement from the Mississippi, where he was leading the Peace Cruise with Soviets and Americans. Three weeks later Howard wrote him:

We are so sorry that you have not fully recovered from your thirty-six-day fast, and that it will not be possible for you to be here with us for the Award ceremony planned for October 7th. We hope that the kidney stones clear up soon, and that you will again be in good health. ... We will postpone the award ceremony until it is convenient for you to travel to this area, perhaps in the spring... We had a successful peace cruise on the Mississippi River during the period of August 5-14... Naturally, during the cruise not one grape was eaten on the boat.

Howard then wrote Bishop Rosazza that Mr. Chávez had ended his fast but was still confined to his home, experiencing health problems, and did not feel well enough to receive the Award. "We indicated our willingness to re-schedule his visit for April

or May," he wrote. "Of course, much will depend upon his progress. We told his representative that we send him our healing thoughts and prayers and that a loving welcome awaits him when he comes."

Mr. Chávez's recovery process was drawn out by the intense schedule he maintained. Then in November the railing of his porch at home gave way; he fell, breaking his wrist and sustaining bruises. He kept going.

So did the fast. After Mr. Chávez broke his own fast, he "passed it along" to the Rev. Jesse Jackson, who was campaigning for the Democratic nomination for President. Thus began a national chain of support for the Fast for Life. Soon hundreds, then thousands were joining in, encouraged by organizations such as the Fellowship of Reconciliation, which urged its members to fast January 15th and 16th "and integrate it into any other action they take on those days. ...In this age of fear for the ecological well-being of the earth it is fitting for us to stand with our farmworker sisters and brothers in this effort."

On March 24th Alice wrote, "After numerous attempts to secure a firm date, at last we have heard from César Chávez!" A U.F.W. staffer had called and indicated that Mr. Chávez could receive the Award in May; the date of the 11th was quickly set. There would be no time for the customary pre-ceremony dinner. He would be driven directly from JFK airport to a press conference and then to the church; there would be a breakfast meeting the morning afterward before he left for the airport.

With just weeks before the date, Howard and Alice and P.E.P.'s secretary, Deborah Cressler, snapped into action, reserving the Center Church on the Green, making travel arrangements, and contacting speakers. Bishop Rosazza responded on April 3rd, "I will not take much time in doing [the introduction], however I hope to do justice to this wonderful man."

Lou Friedman, volunteer press coordinator for the Peace Cruises, mapped out an aggressive publicity campaign; Howard wrote afterward, "We obtained more press coverage for this event than any that we have ever had."

César Chávez

Although the Award was, for the first time, not being presented to someone involved in the struggle for international peace and justice—and the primary criterion had always been that—the decision to present it to César Chávez was an act of faith to the Award’s namesake. No living American, and no American in this century save Martin Luther King, Jr., better personified up to that time what it was to live in the spirit of Gandhi:

- to follow one’s compassion into the political arena;
- to battle the principalities and powers of this world on behalf of the poor and the weak, in the name of what is holy;
- to hold fast to the principles and tactics of nonviolence in the face of all provocations to the contrary;
- to rely for strength on touching the hearts and awakening the consciences first of sympathizers, then of the general public, and finally of the enemy himself;
- most of all to discover the power to call forth sacrifice and purity from others through one’s own extreme acts of sacrifice and purification;
- and finally to wage a long struggle in desolate terrain and dimming light, relying on movements and miracles, where victories are sweet but few and far between, where resources are always lacking and support comes more in words than in truth, and where death ends the march before the goal is reached, liberating a noble spirit to inspire those who must carry it on, carry it on.



César Chávez

César Estrada Chávez was born on his grandfather’s small farm on March 31, 1927. When he was ten, as the depression raged on, they lost the farm and became migrant farmworkers. He attended more than thirty elementary schools and quit school after the eighth grade to help support his family.

He said in 1987 that he learned about dignity, self-respect, and pride from his parents. “Both were from Mexico. My mother is illiterate and my dad had just two or three years of schooling. ... [We] joined every strike that took place in agriculture from the time I was ten years old. Every time there was a strike, we would join *automatically*. So that was in me.”

Once he and his brother “were working in an apricot orchard digging around the trunks of the apricot trees and pouring some kind of powder. We got severely poisoned. That’s when we became aware directly of dangerous pesticides.”¹³⁵

When he was sixteen he lied about his age to join the U.S. Navy. Everything went well until he came home to Delano, a city of south-central California in the fruit-laden San Joaquin Valley, during one leave and decided to go to the movies. The theaters were segregated: whites got two-thirds of the seats, Mexicans, Blacks, and Filipinos shared the rest. He recalls waiting in line for three hours because the “colored” side was full, though the white side wasn’t. “When I came in, I don’t know, I just said “No.” And I went and sat in the other side of the theater.”

The girl with the light said, “You can’t sit there.” And I said, “Well, I’m doing it.” Then the popcorn guy came, then the ticket guy came, then the manager, and they stopped the movie and turned on the lights. And then the owner came and I wouldn’t leave, so the cops came and they dragged me out and threw me in jail. They kept me there all night, trying to figure out what they were going to charge me with. They wanted to charge me with being drunk; I wasn’t. Disturbing the peace? But I wasn’t disturbing the peace. ... Finally they decided that I was a vagrant—even though that was my home town! I lived there! I was in jail a couple of days because I wouldn’t pay them the \$25 fine. It was a mess. I never know to this day what made me do it. Something got in me, and I did it. I had a summary court martial because I was late getting back to the Navy. I couldn’t explain what had happened in Delano except that I was in jail, and those days were very different from today.¹³⁶

He served in the Pacific theater during the War. Howard Frazier was in the same situation at the time, but they didn’t meet until 1952, when Howard was working for the U.S. Department of Labor and was investigating unfair labor practices in California. Mr. Chávez was working in the San Jose area with Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans, who were often mistreated by police and immigration agents. A few months before, he had met an organizer named Fred Ross who was working with Chicanos for the Community Service Organization (C.S.O.), a barrio-based self-help group founded by radical reformer Saul Alinsky. “I came back from the Navy ready to

¹³⁵ Van Wallach, “César Chávez”, *WHOLE LIFE*, January/February 1987.

¹³⁶ “A Talk With U.F.W. President César Chávez”, *CONNECTICUT LABOR NEWS*, Winter 1987, p.10.

work—to *organize!*” he recalled. He was soon a C.S.O. organizer himself. “We were doing a lot of school desegregation cases... winning some cases in court and others we won without going to court.”

He married Helen Fabela, a fellow farmworker. After reading Gandhi’s autobiography, he became a vegetarian and was drawn more toward ascetic ways. Years later he was asked about what inspired him to adopt Gandhi’s discipline. “You can’t adopt his discipline,” he laughed. “I wish I could. I’m attracted to people like Gandhi because sacrifice has a great meaning. Gandhi’s power came from his discipline. Besides that, he gave us the whole idea of boycotting and civil disobedience.” Asked if he ever feared dying as Gandhi did, he replied after a long pause, “No. If you do [fear] that, you won’t be able to do the work.”

He began going into more rural areas, “and I already knew what I was going to do: I was going to help the workers. We did a lot of social service work with them. We translated and helped them get their welfare, but nothing about their wages.” He did register many of them to vote. He became the director of the agency in 1958, but in 1962, as he turned thirty-five, things blew up.

I proposed to the C.S.O. to start a union. They got scandalized! “Start a union! We can’t do that!” So I left and founded the union. ... I was a community organizer for fifteen years. That’s where I learned my organizing, and I applied what I learned to organizing a union. [Farm workers] aren’t under the National Labor Relations Act, so we couldn’t just have elections and build a union that way. We built it by strikes and boycotts.

He and Helen joined with another C.S.O. organizer named Dolores Huerta and started to bring together farmworkers in the eighty-six cities in California’s central valley. The only difficult demand was that the workers should be paid the wages they earned—not increased wages, just what they were entitled to. That was difficult enough. The workers were frightened of the growers, and of what union talk would do to their jobs, “so I wouldn’t admit it was a union,” Mr. Chávez said. “I told them, ‘This is a social group and we need to have social events.’”

There were plenty of migrant workers from Mexico willing to work for pennies under the harshest conditions to help support their families across the border. They were the key to the profits of California’s powerful grape and lettuce growers. Called

“stoop-laborers”, at the rock bottom of the labor pool, they lived in pitiful camps, slept in sheds or buses, and labored from sunrise to sundown in the fields with no sanitary facilities. They were directly exposed to massive doses of pesticides, and no one gave a thought to their health. Schooling for their children was minimal at best. Any protests were brutally suppressed. The growers argued that anything better for their laborers would wipe out their profits.

For generations farmworkers have been one of the most deprived groups in the country. Generation after generation, book after study after documentary film, their miserable living and working conditions have been laid before us. The labor is strenuous, even deforming; the compensation is far under official poverty levels. Childhood begins in substandard housing with minimal sanitary facilities, continually disrupted schooling, little access to decent health care, and often child labor. Toilets and water are often not accessible in the fields. Health conditions are so poor that infant mortality is at third-world levels, while life expectancy averages only forty-nine years. Rates of infectious and chronic diseases, malnutrition, maternal mortality, and industrial and automobile accidents are deplorable. Farmworkers and their families are often subjected to dangerous pesticides, and clusters of cancers concentrate in farmworker communities. Despite their obvious exploitation, farmworkers are specifically excluded from basic labor laws such as the National Labor Relations Act, and have lower standards applied by others, such as with many child labor laws.

It had been the same for decades, as expressed in Woody Guthrie's song from the 1930s:

*It's a mighty hard road that these poor hands have hoed,
These poor feet have traveled a hot, dusty road,
On the edge of your city you'll see us, and then
We come with the dust and we're gone with the wind.
California, Arizona, we work all your crops,
Then it's up north to Oregon to gather your hops,
Dig the beets from your ground, cut the grapes from your vine,
To set on your tables that light, sparkling wine.*

César and Dolores laid the groundwork quietly for four years. By May of 1965 they had twelve hundred families in California's Coachella, Imperial, and San Joaquin

valleys signed up as members of a group called the National Farmworkers Association—not a union. In September the group voted to join Filipino workers in their strike against two major grape growers. As Prof. Hector Calderon¹³⁷ of U.C.L.A. wrote, “The repercussions of this event, especially a new ethnic pride, were felt at every level throughout the Mexican American communities and dramatically transformed them.” The Association joined the A.F.L.-C.I.O.’s Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC) in a strike against grape growers in Mr. Chávez’s old home town of Delano (where the U.F.W.’s headquarters is still located). They had become a union, with Mr. Chávez as president and Ms. Huerta as vice-president.

They presented a modest list of demands to growers, which were ignored. He and Ms. Huerta settled on the three-part strategy they followed for the next three decades. The first principle was volunteerism, including a reliance on full-time volunteers and subsistence compensation for union personnel—Mr. Chávez never received more than six thousand dollars per year from the union. The second was nonviolence, as adapted from the experience of Gandhi and the American civil rights movement. The third principle, unique in Gandhian struggles, was a labor-consumer coalition—especially through boycotts of produce.

Then they called their first strike. The growers were stunned. He recalls, “The day we struck it was, ‘Who in the hell is that guy? Where’d he come from? ...The growers were *vicious*. You can’t believe it. ...The growers ran the county. The police were there when we were beaten up, but they wouldn’t interfere.”

I went to speak in 1965 at a junior college in Bakersfield. I thought it was going to be just students, but the place was loaded with growers and they were half-drunk. They kneed me and knocked me down and beat me up on the stage. The police came, but I said, “I’m not going to go. I want to finish my speech. And I spoke for forty-five minutes, the cops had to make a ring around me and the cameras were on and people were shouting and really bad stuff. The police put me in a car and had to escort me thirty miles home.

¹³⁷ He is now chair of the César E. Chávez Center for Interdisciplinary Instruction in Chicana and Chicano Studies. Quoted from a memo to the Chicana/Chicano scholarly community dated March 8, 1995. He studied and taught at Yale from 1975 to 1988 (excepting 1981-83 at U.C.L.A.).

In 1966 Mr. Chávez's group and the AWOC merged into the United Farm Workers and continued their strike. Their objectives were three: recognition as the farmworkers' bargaining unit, collective bargaining, and the reduction or cessation in the profigate use of the worst pesticides, including DDT. Two years into the strike, as spirits began to flag, he initiated his first fast. It lasted twenty-five days and gave the strike a renewed sense of purpose.

The growers stepped up their illegal recruitment efforts in Mexico to bring in enough temporary workers to nullify the effects of the strike. ("In farm labor very few disputes have been won on a strike basis," he said in 1987.) And their resistance became even more brutal; five union members were murdered while on the picket line. Realizing that they would need help from beyond the union's horizon, he initiated a nationwide boycott of table grapes.

It was the end of the 1960s, a time of student radicalism and citizen involvement, and joining the grape boycott seemed complementary with participation in the civil rights and antiwar movements. Grocery stores were picketed, consumers were asked to sign petitions of support and to leave the grapes and lettuce in the store, and supermarket chains were asked to stop bringing that produce into the store at all.

The growers and their agents in power did what they could to turn back the tide. "We have a picture from the grape boycott in 1968," he recalled. "The growers were beginning to feel the heat. Nixon was running for President and [then-Governor] Reagan came out to meet him in Fresno, in the center of the Valley. I'm sure they got to speaking on grapes. So getting on the plane, they were waving and eating grapes."

Despite the display, the boycott continued to take hold. It was something simple, a small but tangible sacrifice that people of good will could make on their trips to the supermarket that might help the less fortunate struggling for a better life and minimal justice, a faint echo of the sacrifice César Chávez was willing to make for *La Causa*. McDonalds signed on, then other major produce buyers. At the height of the boycott, Mr. Chávez estimated, twenty-three percent of American consumers were not buying California grapes, lettuce, and wine. "Twenty-three percent boycotting is disastrous" for the growers, he said in 1987. "Anything over sixteen percent is pretty disastrous for the growers in any one market."

U.F.W. Membership grew to more than sixty thousand. After five years of the strike, a few growers signed three-year contracts. Others were forced to follow. At the high point the union had “close to two hundred contracts,” as Mr. Chávez recalled later, and the union’s membership was up to seventy-three thousand. It was a short-lived victory; vegetable growers signed with the Teamsters, who were willing to collude with the growers in sabotaging the progress of the farmworkers in exchange for expanding its own membership, and when the contracts expired, grape growers went with the Teamsters also. In protest, more than ten thousand farmworkers walked out of the fields.

Mr. Chávez called another strike in Phoenix, Arizona in 1972. It lasted for twenty-four days and was in response to the passage of a repressive farm labor law. (That law was used sixteen years later to win a huge judgment against the U.F.W.) Within two years, an estimated seventeen million Americans were participating in the boycott.

In 1975 Jerry Brown became governor of California and responded to growers’ demands that he do something about the U.F.W. boycotts by approaching Mr. Chávez directly. Those talks led to what he later called “the worst mistake we made.”



The idea was an exchange: surrender the boycott as a weapon, and get in return the guarantee, enforced by state law, of the right to organize and bargain collectively. “We thought if we were covered by the law, then... we knew we could take care of ourselves because the majority of workers would be sympathetic to the idea of a union,” he explained.

Gov. Brown helped push through the Agricultural Labor Relations Act, written in part by Mr. Chávez, and in 1977 the Teamsters agreed that the farmworkers should be organized by the U.F.W. in exchange for the Teamsters’ organizing the truck drivers and cannery workers. Union membership was over a hundred thousand. It seemed that the U.F.W. had reached the Promised Land.

But in 1983 Jerry Brown's two terms ended, and Republican administrations at the state and national level reversed many of the U.F.W.'s hard-won gains. The Agricultural Labor Relations Board became more than anything else an agent of the growers, and the collective bargaining law was spottily enforced. "The damn thing never worked, so now we find ourselves without the law and without the boycott," Mr. Chávez said in 1987. "If we had kept up the boycott, there would have been a lot of differences. Although the growers made a lot of promises to the governor and ourselves, the moment the boycott was off they began to renege on all of them."

The changed political climate erected formidable barriers against the union and neutralized much of what it had accomplished. Over the next decade membership dwindled by sixty percent.

Mr. Chávez responded to the new climate with new tactics. "We are an economic organization, so economic pressure has to be there—always."

We've been around a long time and we still have a very good reputation with the support groups. As long as we don't get involved fighting the growers politically, trying to get them to change the law—because we are a minority—we can beat them economically. We need fifty-one percent of the vote to win politically, but give me sixteen percent and we will devastate them economically.

He initiated a boycott of table grapes, iceberg lettuce, and Gallo wines in 1984, turning from the picket lines to the science of direct mail appeals. The U.F.W.'s lists were among the largest and best-organized of any organization appealing to the progressive public, and the union developed its computers and fulfillment systems and mastered the arts of targeted marketing. The message was: join the boycott and contribute to the union's campaign for justice and against the over-use of pesticides. As the membership declined and the appeal letters churned out, one critic said the U.F.W. had become "less a union and more a direct-mail organization."

It was strange to hear the son of Gandhi talking confidently of consumer awareness and computerized phone calls. In two years the U.F.W. sent out over ten million appeal letters, and Mr. Chávez embarked on a constant media tour that went on for almost two years. "I've been to almost every t.v. program ... in the markets we've selected throughout North America," he said in the midst of it. "The first year and a half was to get consumers acquainted with the issues, ask them not to eat grapes. Now we

are starting the secondary boycott, starting to picket the stores and ask them not to carry grapes,” he said in early 1987.

“We live in a different era” than during the earlier strikes, he said after the Award ceremony in 1989.

In the 'sixties the students were picketing out in the streets. The boycott was parallel to the anti-war effort. That's not happening now, but more people are committed to change in this country. Today there are more organizations involved; the boycott is an art of coalition. This boycott was dubbed 'high tech' because we were doing demographic studies and psychographic studies; we were targeting very specific consumers. We have maybe two or three different boycotts [in terms of markets and focus]. We don't care if we see a lot of picket lines. We want to win, and it can be done this way. We can't depend on the media to cover the boycott. We need to find innovative ways of getting the message out. The Fast for Life [is an example]. It's not the religious community that has really jumped into this—it's the labor community. One hard-boiled guy who said after he fasted for three days, “Now the damn boycott means a lot to me.”¹³⁸

The strategy was based on the sense that a large base of support already existed, and only needed to be re-activated by being contacted and oriented to the current struggle. Organized labor and its supporters would get behind the union issues like wages, working conditions, and contracts, the liberal and religious communities would join in out of compassion and to stand against injustice, and apolitical consumers would be reached on the issue of pesticide-soaked produce. And what about the person-to-person contact that won the hearts of millions in the early days?

Nobody does person-to-person any more. You can't sell soap person-to-person any more, and you can't sell boycotts that way either. Look what [mass advertising techniques] have done. That's how they sell their cars and t.v.'s, and also their grapes. No, we have enough people in the country to support us without having to convince them. We have to let them know what we are doing, and that's a difficult task.

The campaign succeeded in maintaining the U.F.W.'s strong presence despite its declining membership and dues income. And the boycott of grapes, iceberg lettuce, and Gallo wines took hold for awhile, but it was a different time. The progressive agenda was choked with boycotts of everything from oil products to athletic shoes,

with more being announced every day—so many that no one could possibly keep track of, sort out, or observe them all. Mailboxes were choked as well, with all manner of appeals whose appearances all looked similar: the celebrity endorser, the fake handwritten message in blue print, the four-page “typed” letter, the “Frankly, I’m puzzled” final appeal note, etc. The U.F.W.’s was just another one on the stack—or in the can.

Much of Mr. Chávez’s time and energy was diverted when, as the growers began to feel the bite of the secondary boycott, one of the largest of them hit the union with a massive law suit. A Salinas lettuce grower called Bruce Church Inc. (B.C.I.), the third-largest vegetable producer, with sales over \$100 million, knew that California labor law protected the union by allowing secondary boycotts. But then there was that Arizona law that forbade such boycotts—the one passed in 1972 that had sparked the U.F.W.’s second strike.

The boycott against B.C.I. had been initiated in 1979, when the union’s contract expired and negotiations over a new contract broke down. The boycott against B.C.I.’s “Red Coach” brand of lettuce was intended to get it back to the bargaining table, but to no avail. When ten supermarket chains, McDonalds, and other big customers dropped the brand by 1984, the suit was filed in Arizona.

In April of 1988 the union was found guilty. Damages were assessed at \$5.4 million. Although the union’s attorneys were confident that the judgment would be reversed on appeal, Arizona law required that the appealing party must put up the full amount of the judgment, plus interest and court costs, to proceed.

It wasn’t the first such case. The year before a California judge had awarded a produce grower \$1.7 million on the basis that the U.F.W. had sanctioned violence during a strike. Though patently absurd, the judgment could only be appealed if the union could produce the damages to be held in escrow until the appeal was decided. Donations covered the amount and the appeal went forward.

That same year, Mr. Chávez had summed up the farmworkers’ movement’s perennially precarious position. “The union is ever under pressure,” he told an interviewer.

¹³⁸ Melinda Tuhus, “20 Questions of César Chávez”, *NEW HAVEN ADVOCATE*, May 22, 1989.

Agribusiness is a huge industry. Its one dream is to terminate the union. But the union is going to be around for a long time to come. If I were to disappear today, the union would continue to grow. It's a true group. We have developed a whole following of people very strongly committed to the idea of trade unions, and they are not going to get rid that.

Though the U.F.W. had lost substantial ground after five years of legal battles, grower-sponsored Republican counterattacks, and a move away from the tactics that brought the early victories, Mr. Chávez was honored the world over for the miracle he had accomplished in raising the lot of labor's "lowest of the low". Even the growers had learned to look up to him. "In the early days we faced a lot of ridicule; then after a while there was a lot of anger; and after awhile the growers were uncertain; and then they still didn't like me, but they paid me some respect," Mr. Chávez reflected in the year before receiving the Gandhi Award. In 1987, among many honors, Mr. Chávez received the Most Reverend Joseph F. Donnelly Memorial Award from the Office of Urban Affairs of the Hartford Archdiocese, which acknowledged his "significant contributions toward achievement of the Catholic vision of social justice."

But *La Causa* was far from won. It was characterized by a peculiar mix of honors in the hallowed halls and brutal resistance in the fields, streets, court houses, and bargaining rooms. An extreme illustration happened in September 1988. As the severely weakened Mr. Chávez was recovering from his fast, the woman who had helped him found the U.F.W. was beaten by a policeman in San Francisco, as were two other women who were demonstrating with her at a campaign appearance by George Bush, who had announced opposition to the grape boycott. Dolores Huerta suffered severe bruises and four broken ribs; she nearly died from internal bleeding, because her spleen had been ruptured and had to be removed. The F.B.I. dismissed her complaint, and the grand jury that was convened to consider indicting the policeman responsible instead recommended an increase in the number of police infiltrators inside the U.F.W. organization. The police oversight committee filed brutality charges against the policeman, but the police commission voted overwhelmingly to overrule them and exonerated the policeman. The same day of that vote, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors unanimously voted Dolores Huerta San Francisco's International Woman of the Year.

The accomplishment of César Chávez was summed up by the P.E.P. press release announcing the Award to him:

“In 1973 when the farmworkers’ table grape contracts came up for renewal, the largest and most successful farm strike in American history took place. Yet today about eighty percent of California farmworkers still suffer from poverty and abuse. On August 21, 1988, Chávez ended a thirty-six-day water-only fast to protest the indiscriminate uses of pesticides and to focus on the suffering of the poor who yearn for a better world. Chávez said, “If you’re outraged at conditions, then you can’t possibly be free or happy until you devote all your time to changing them and do nothing but that. The man whom Robert Kennedy called “one of the heroic figures of our time” went on to say, “We have tasted freedom and dignity, and we will fight to the end before we give it up.”

Chávez has tirelessly worked to end the gross exploitation of farmworkers and has done so in the tradition of Gandhi’s nonviolent philosophy. He has shown by personal example the necessity for farmworkers to develop the power to control their own destinies and the necessity for the never-ending work for social change and social justice. He is... one of America’s greatest spiritual and labor leaders...one of the world’s best examples of the Gandhian philosophy of nonviolence.

The 1989 Award Ceremony

Early on May 11, 1989, Roberto de la Cruz arrived in New Haven. He was there as regional representative of the U.F.W. in Boston to witness the ceremony at Center Church on the Green that evening. He had gotten there early to check out the church and the hotel where the breakfast meeting would be the next morning. César Chávez was the focus of numerous death threats, and, given the fates of his martyred spiritual precursors, a security check-out was a standard preliminary to his appearances.

He also checked out the other accommodations. Howard had offered either to pay for hotel rooms, or to provide a room for Mr. Chávez at P.E.P.’s house on the Milford shore. The U.F.W. office replied that he would “much prefer to stay in private homes rather than hotels.” His diet was another issue; like Gandhi, he adhered to a macrobiotic diet when possible, breaking down to consume a cheese sandwich when a restaurant along the road offered nothing closer to his preferences. Howard and Alice,

familiar with such a diet themselves from their annual yoga retreats, made sure that his dietary needs were met.

He was driven from JFK airport to New Haven by Arturo Rodriguez, who represented the New York region of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). He was also Mr. Chávez's son-in-law, and in four years would become his successor. They drove directly to the downtown Park Plaza, where a press conference had been announced.

There he told the assembled reporters that, despite growers' claims that sales of table grapes were better than ever, the latest boycott had cut sales by eleven percent nationwide. He said the union would continue the boycott "until consumers demand clean food" and supermarkets begin to take more responsibility for the quality of the food they sell.

He also announced that the Fast For Life would continue, and that he would invite New Haveners to join in. Warren Gould, the new president of the A.F.L.-C.I.O.'s Greater New Haven Central Labor Council, which coordinates the area's labor movement, had already pledged fifty days of fasting among union members.

In a brief interview afterward, Mr. Chávez commented on relations between the United States and Panama. The Panamanian leader, former C.I.A. informant Manuel Noreiga, had been defeated the previous Sunday in a free election marred by violence, and had announced that he would ignore the results. Tensions between him and the Bush administration were already building toward the U.S. invasion that would happen in December of that year. "I don't condone what's going on there," he said, "but intervention leads to the worst sin we could commit, that of forcing people to run things the way we want them to run." After the short-term problems with Noriega are resolved, he said, "there will be lingering resentment, and we have enough of that in the world against us now."

After the press conference, Mr. Chávez met briefly with local taxi drivers, who have voted to form a union. He advised them, "Multiply your strength by going to the community for support." Then he was driven across town to the Yale Co-op store to

show solidarity for workers there who faced contract talks the following month.¹³⁹ He said, "These [local] disputes are not isolated. You'll see us on the picket lines for other unions, because it's our responsibility to be there."

Howard Frazier was master of ceremonies. In his opening remarks, he made reference to quotations from Mr. Chávez, such as:

Nonviolence becomes more powerful as violence becomes more pronounced.

The greatest tragedy is to live and die without knowing the satisfaction of giving your life for others.

Mr. Chávez had brought with him a new thirteen-minute documentary film, "Wrath of Grapes"; Board member Bruce Martin served as projectionist. Warren Gould welcomed Mr. Chávez on behalf of the labor movement in the New Haven area. Olga Rodriguez, president of the Connecticut Migratory Children's Program of the Migrant Education Resource Center in Rocky Hill, then presented Mr. Chávez with a plaque and reminded the audience how important agribusiness is to Connecticut, and how much of the agricultural work in the state is still done by migrant workers.

Mr. Chávez was introduced by the Most Reverend Peter Rosazza, who recalled the annual vacation he spent one year picketing with Mr. Chávez against lettuce and grape growers. The Bishop had his own progressive résumé, including the time in 1981 when he and others occupied a vacant Hartford hotel to dramatize the crisis in affordable housing.¹⁴⁰ Throughout the 'eighties he was one of the state's most consistent and outspoken critics of U.S. aggression against Nicaragua and U.S. military support of the repressive regime in El Salvador. In 1986 he was commissioned to draft a pastoral letter to be signed by American Catholic bishops called "Economic Justice for All" concerning the moral aspects of capitalism; it asserted that people had economic rights just as they had civil rights. Bishop Rosazza described Mr. Chávez as "not only a strong labor leader, he is a man of deep spirituality and great heart."

¹³⁹ Mary Agnes Carey, "Chávez claims grape boycott has squeezed sales by 11%", *NEW HAVEN REGISTER*, May 13, 1989.

¹⁴⁰ James V. Heallon, "'Padre Pedro' begins duties as New Haven-area bishop", *NEW HAVEN REGISTER*, Sunday April 10, 1988, A-3, A-19.

P.E.P.'s president, Martin Cherniack, who had moved to New Haven to become an Assistant Professor for Yale's Occupational Medicine program, presented the Award. The framed citation was prepared by Martha Link Walsh, who decorated her astonishing calligraphy with beautifully intricate papercutting art of grapes and grape vines. The text, written by Howard and Martin, read:

*Social justice cannot be evoked at will.
Labor leader, political leader, social leader,
an of peace, insurrectionist against the twin
evils of race and class, César Chávez has
been a giant on the national landscape.
Promoting Enduring Peace has presented
its award in Gandhi's name to men and
women of great accomplishment, but to no
one closer to Gandhi, as disciple and peer.
Presented on the eleventh day of May, 1989*

PROMOTING ENDURING PEACE

Martin Cherniack, President

Mr. Chávez then made his acceptance speech, which became a popular P.E.P. reprint. Speaking "with his characteristic blend of dignity and fire," he confessed that he felt "rather ill at ease receiving this award knowing full well that Gandhi would have objected to it very much."

So instead ... I am accepting [it] on behalf of Nan Freeman, a young Jewish woman from New England who was killed on our picket line, our first martyr, at a sugar cane field near Belle Glade, Florida, ... on January 25th, 1972. She was nineteen years old. *Gandhi says, "Those who die unresistantly are likely to steal the fury of violence by their holiness and sacrifice."*

I also want to accept the Award on behalf of our second martyr, Nagi Daifallah, a young Arab from South Yemen, a farm worker, immigrant, who was beaten to death in the streets of Lamont, California during our second grape strike on August 15th, 1973. Nagi was nineteen years old. *And Gandh says, "He who meets death without striking a blow fulfills his duty one hundred percent. The result is in God's hands."*

I also wish to accept the award on behalf of our third martyr, Juan de la Cruz, sixty years old, from Mexico, a farm worker, who was shot down on the picket line near Irvine, California, two days after Nagi was killed... by a strike breaker

who came with an automatic rifle and shot at the whole picket line. *And Gandhi says, "To lay down one's life for what one considers to be right is the very core of nonviolence."*

I'd also like to accept the award on behalf of our fourth martyr, Rufino Contreras, a lettuce farm worker. He was gunned down by company supervisors during the lettuce strike on February 10th, 1979, in Calexico, California ... He was twenty-eight years old, married with two children. *And Gandhi says, "There is no such thing as defeat or death in nonviolence."*

Last, I would like to accept this award on behalf of our fifth martyr, Rene Lopez, twenty-one years old, a dairy worker who was killed with a gun, with a shot to the head, when he stepped out of a voting booth, having just voted to be represented by our union, near Fresno, California. ... Rene was twenty-one years old. *And Gandhi says, "In nonviolence the bravery consists in dying, not in killing."* ...

Ours is a struggle that has lasted for almost a hundred years. We're still struggling. But agribusiness in California developed unlike that in most other areas. The [labor-intensive] crops and the methods were developed to fit a labor force that was already there without jobs. ... Having workers without jobs meant being able to keep the wages down, the conditions as they were, and the unions out. So agribusiness has ... controlled immigration policy for many years to always keep a surplus labor force. This... has prevented the farm workers from getting the protection that other workers have, to organize and bargain collectively under the National Labor Relations Act.

There are other problems... In agribusiness the labor force is a "cycling" one. ... You have a constant flow of workers in and out. In addition, jobs are very seasonal, intermittent. ...

Back in the early 'fifties we knew ... it would be almost impossible to win a strike... We were going to need outside help. And so we went to Gandhi. And we learned that he also needed a lot of help. And we came upon the boycott even before we started the union. We have had fifty-two boycotts. And they have worked. ...

The boycott is working. Across America people are joining together telling the growers that the workers need to be protected from pesticides, that the workers need fair and free elections, and that the growers need to sit down and bargain in good faith with those workers who do want a union, and to use collective bargaining as a way to resolve the issues that confront them. ...

It is estimated that three hundred thousand farmworkers are poisoned by pesticides each year. The central valley in California is one of the richest agricultural areas in the world and in its midst there are clusters of children with cancer. ... In town after town little children are being stricken with cancer, are being born with physical birth defects, and are dying. ... Parents fear for the lives of their children, and they ask with fear in their voices, "Where will this deadly plague strike next?" ...

Farm workers are suffering from nerve disorders, liver and kidney problems, sterility, unexplained illnesses. Farmworker women have high rates of miscarriage; their children are often born with deformities—children like Felipe Franco. ...

This is why in July and August of last year I embarked on a thirty-six day unconditional water-only fast. Some of you here have fasted. You know that some great things happen with fasting. Here's what I learned in my ordeal last summer. ...

Physically my fast was torture at first, and then it gave way to a great rejuvenation in my body. I felt cleansed when it was all over. Spiritually, my fast worked like a powerful medicine that kept my spirit from sagging. And feelings of fear and doubt and anger that I had were wiped away and I could see things very clearly. I saw the powerful urge that raged within me, and drove me to the fast, and I saw my self-doubt, and yes, my shame, for not doing enough about this problem. I asked myself, do I share deeply enough the pain of those who work with the poisons? ... And I began to see other people, the good ones and the bad ones; and I saw the terrible suffering among farm workers and their children. I saw the crushing of farmworkers' rights, and the death of good-faith collective bargaining and the ever-increasing use of pesticides. ...

The fast is the heart-felt prayer for purification and strengthening for all of us.

The fast is an act of penance for those of us in moral authority. By that I mean all of us who know the difference between right and wrong—we're in moral authority.

The fast is a declaration of non-cooperation with those who would put their profits... ahead of tragic human consequences.

During the fast, towards the end, I reached a great clarity where I could see exactly what had to be done. I could see that we needed to build strength to fight the scourge of poisons that threaten our people and our land and our food. ...

I believe fasting is the most powerful way we can demonstrate our dislike of what is taking place. By fasting... you become involved, not only physically, but

also spiritually, with these people. There's a great irony... that the men, women, and children whose labor and sweat and sacrifice produce the greatest abundance of food in the history of humankind often don't have enough to eat themselves. ...

The times we face truly call for all of us to do more, even more to stop this evil in our midst. It calls for us to do simple nonviolent deeds for justice. The answer lies with you and me. It is not going to be solved by the government, not in the halls of Congress, not by magic, not by decree. ... I've seen nothing done, nothing really substantial, by legislative action or by decree. It has been at the marketplace. And again it will be at the marketplace. ...

I hope we will endure until the fields are safe for farmworkers, the environment is preserved for future generations, and our food is once again a source of nourishment and life.

That night thirty-nine people signed up for one or more days of the Fast for Life. The plate was passed and the several hundred donated \$755 to the farmworker's cause. Checks and cash totaling \$283 were placed in a basket on the literature table, where \$255 was taken in for U.F.W. books and videos.

The following morning Mr. Chávez attended a breakfast meeting of about forty-five people at the hotel. Along with Board members, U.F.W. people, and participants in the program, P.E.P. had invited regional and local labor union officials, area clergy, local progressive activists, environmentalists concerned about pesticides, and reporters.

A purpose of the meeting was to give Mr. Chávez a chance to hear the reflections of the local activists present on how the U.F.W. struggle was relevant to their own issues. Maria Lopez, director of the Migrant Education Resource Center, reminded those present that New Haven, like many other communities in the state, have impoverished populations of migrant workers—including over three thousand children of migrant workers. “They work in the strawberry fields, the mushroom farms, the fishing industry—in New Haven its packing fish. It has a significant impact on those families. We have children all around the state who are fourteen years old but still in the sixth grade.”

Warren Gould recalled Mr. Chávez's early experiences finding ways to organize the “unorganizable” and compared it to organizing efforts going on in New Haven, at

the Holiday Inn, the cab company, and other sites. “This is a labor town, but it’s also a poverty town,” he said. “We think the best way to turn poverty around is to get workers organized into the union.”¹⁴¹

Suzanne Langille, director of the Connecticut Fund for the Environment, announced that the same pesticides poisoning California farmworkers are “a hidden danger on our soil,” not just from crops, but from homeowners, who “put as much pesticide on their lawns as farmers put on their crops. It’s in our food, but also our groundwater. Our children play in parks sprayed with pesticide, and golf courses are treated weekly.”

Mr. Chávez, reflecting on the need to get the word out about pesticides and produce, said, “The day the consumer demands clean food, they are going to get clean food.”

After the Award

P.E.P received a letter dated June 7, 1989 and signed by Mr. Chávez:

Dear Alice and Howard:

We thank you for all your good deeds. Especially for your warm and friendly hospitality. Helen also sends her thanks for the beautiful shawl and the other gifts. May God Keep You.

Peace,

César E. Chávez.

In the coming months and years, he continued with his labor-consumer alliance strategy and with his battles to save the union from being bankrupted by legal judgments. The 1988 judgment for close to four million dollars was thrown out by an Arizona court because the secondary boycott had occurred in California. But it awarded the grower another judgment, this time for \$2.9 million—well in excess of the union’s total assets. The case dragged on, requiring Mr. Chávez’s testimony. On April 22, 1993, during the second appeals trial, he suspended an intense travel and speaking schedule to devote a grueling day in Arizona to giving testimony under a hostile barrage from opposing attorneys. He would have to return the next day for yet more hours of the same.

¹⁴¹ Bruce Shapiro, “Activists honor labor hero”, NEW HAVEN INDEPENDENT, May 18, 1989.

That night, in the Arizona farming town of San Luis, “thirty-five miles and sixty-six years distant” from his birthplace in the Gila River Valley, he died in his sleep.

He was buried at the U.F.W. field office north of Delano; the funeral crowd exceeded thirty-five thousand and stretched for three miles. The mighty and the meek vied for the honor of carrying the plain pine casket “even a few steps”. Messages poured in from presidents and the Pope, and the head of the California senate called him “the greatest Californian of the twentieth century.” President Clinton issued Proclamation 6552 on April 28, 1993, praising his life, his accomplishments, and his spirituality.

On August 8 of the following year, the President posthumously awarded Chávez the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation’s highest civilian honor. Since then, thousands of academic programs, scholarships, streets, parks, plazas, civic centers, schools, libraries, and other public facilities across the United States, especially in the Southwest, have been given his name. Someday, it is thought, his birthday will be celebrated nationally along with that of Martin Luther King, Jr., as it already is in California. One U.F.W. supporter, now a reporter, commented in 1995, “People want to honor a movement abandoned by so many during the waning years of Chávez’s life. Name a school for Chávez and his name lives on. If Chávez issued a press statement from the pearly gates, perhaps he’d say, ‘Don’t name parks after me. Support the U.F.W. and its reaffirmation to take to the fields and organize again.’”¹⁴²

Others recalled that Mr. Chávez was not a plaster saint. He had his peeves, his bad days, his dislikes. “Love is the most important ingredient in nonviolent work,” he said—“love the opponent, but we haven’t learned yet how to love the growers.” Of the Richard Attenborough film “Gandhi”, for example, “Awful” was his review. “They didn’t say anything about unions; Gandhi built unions in India. They didn’t say anything about the thousands of volunteers he had working for him, nothing about his fundraising. It was the Hollywood version. But it was good it came out because people didn’t know anything about him.”

¹⁴² Rick Martinez, “How Would César Chávez Want His Work to be Honored?”, Hispanic Link News Service, July 9, 1995.

He loved jazz and collected classic jazz records: “I like Billie Holiday immensely, Louie Armstrong, Sidney Bechet, the Bird.” He had hobbies, as long as they somehow helped the movement: photography, training dogs. “I just learn it and go somewhere else and do it. That’s how I keep my sanity.” And he was a family man; he and Helen were close until the end, and four of his eight children came to work at bare subsistence wages for their father’s cause.

The day after his death, union supporters held a twenty-four hour vigil at the courthouse in his honor. “César gave his last ounce of strength defending the farm workers in this case, standing up for their First Amendment right to speak out for themselves,” said Arturo Rodriguez, who succeeded Mr. Chávez as president of the U.F.W. the month after his death. “He believed in his heart that the farmworkers were right in boycotting B.C.I. lettuce during the 1980s and he was determined to prove that in court.”¹⁴³

As the court case proceeded, the A.F.L.-C.I.O. and several affiliated unions—AFSCME, electrical workers, communications workers, machinists, mine workers, service employees, the U.A.W., and others—pledged to cover the judgment in the event that the grower appealed successfully.

Three years passed. The owner of the grower retired, and his son, Steve Taylor, took over.

In 1996, on Valentine’s Day, the appeals court threw out the judgment. On June 7th the parties reached a historic accord that ended the one of the longest, most far-reaching legal struggles in labor history. After almost eighteen years of boycotts, law suits, rallies, protests, and marches that involved the entire labor movement, the grower’s new owner agreed to drop the matter and sign a five-year contract with the U.F.W. providing for substantial wage increases, full benefits, a seniority system, and a pension plan. The contract also included limitations on the use of pesticides and provisions for the use of protective clothing. The boycott was over. “This case is older than my children,” said Mr. Taylor. “Businesses that don’t change become extinct. And unions are the same way.”

¹⁴³ AFL-CIO NEWS, February 16, 1996.

Starting after Mr. Chávez's death, the U.F.W. began to enjoy a string of election victories in California that many called part of a renaissance of the farmworker movement.

"In focusing attention on migrant workers, Chávez also helped bring to light the struggle of millions of urban Mexican Americans seeking better housing, more employment opportunities, and increased political representation," wrote Renita Sandosham of SFSU in 1995.¹⁴⁴

The resurgence of César Chávez's *Causa* turned union has continued. By early 1996 the U.F.W. had won thirteen straight elections in California and Washington, and brought four thousand workers under contract. John Sweeney, president of the A.F.L.-C.I.O., says that the U.F.W. has become a sparkling example of a "new spirit in labor." The U.F.W. is trying to "take wages out of competition" by organizing most of the workers in a particular commodity. The U.F.W.'s radio stations invited farmworkers with problems to call the union.

The revival of the U.F.W. is reflected in the programs of grower organizations—the Ag Personnel Management Association's program held in March 1996 in Ventura included sessions on "surviving the organizing attempt" and "union-proofing your work force." Even the California Farmer ran a story that warned farmers that the U.F.W. has not gone away.

As of late 1996 the U.F.W. now represents half of California's rose workers and two-thirds of the mushroom workers in the Central Coast, and is targeting strawberry workers. The union claims twenty-four thousand members, plus ten thousand associate members. The U.F.W.'s new president, Arturo Rodriguez, has tried to establish a more conciliatory atmosphere. Recently he said that the U.F.W. "can't put an employer out of business. That does us no good. That does the farmworkers no good."

In early 1996 the U.F.W. announced a coordinated effort with their past rivals, the Teamsters, in Washington—the U.F.W. would organize forty thousand apple pickers, and the Teamsters the thirteen thousand non-farm workers who pack the apples. The same joint organizing strategy may also be tried in California strawberries.

¹⁴⁴ In GOLDEN GATOR, the semi-weekly newsletter published by the SFSU journalism department, April 4, 1995.

The struggle continues. In Florida, the U.F.W. is boycotting Prime-label mushrooms from Quincy Farms--a 615-employee operation near Tallahassee, Florida, to win recognition and a contract. In March 1996, Quincy Farms dismissed pickers who participated in a U.F.W. rally. The U.F.W. has nine organizers in the area. There are no seasonal farmworkers under union contract in Florida, and no federal or state law obligates Florida farm employers to recognize or to bargain with farmworkers. Florida is also a right-to-work state, which means that, even if the U.F.W. negotiates a contract, some workers could elect not to become U.F.W. members.¹⁴⁵

The deeper struggle against the prejudice at the root of the ill-treatment of farmworkers continues as well. A few months after Mr. Chávez's death, Rush Limbaugh told his vast listening audience, "If we are going to start rewarding no skills and stupid people—I'm serious, let the kinds of jobs that take absolutely no knowledge whatsoever to do—let stupid and unskilled Mexicans do that work."¹⁴⁶

Perhaps the best rejoinder was from César Chávez himself, as quoted by Howard Frazier in his introduction at the Award ceremony:

If you muster enough power, you can move things—but it's all on the basis of power. The only way to generate power is to do a lot of work. ... The job can't be done unless there's a commitment; it's the deeds that count.

We want sufficient power to control our own destinies. This is our struggle. It's a lifetime job. The work for social change and against social injustice is never ended.

¹⁴⁵ Compiled from A.F.L.-C.I.O. bulletins for 1996.

¹⁴⁶ Radio show quoted by Fairness & Accuracy In Media (FAIR) Newsletter, Fall 1995.

Chapter Twenty-four

1989-90: The Little Children Suffer—Marian Wright Edelman

*There is only one child in the world and the child's name
is All Children . . . This child speaks our name.
Carl Sandburg¹⁴⁷*

In March of 1989, even before the Award had been presented to César Chávez, Howard Frazier solicited Board members' votes for the next Award, which would be over a year later in May of 1990. As was the case of last year, there was a choice between nominees whose work had been in the international sphere and those who addressed human needs within the United States.

The first of the six nominees was the Soviet Peace Committee, erroneously listed first on the alphabetical list (the president's name started with a B). The non-governmental organization had led the Soviet peace effort since 1949, endorsing the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign and other programs viewed favorably by the world's peace activists. The Committee had also sponsored numerous citizen diplomacy projects involving citizens from the United States and many other countries. Some of the most widely publicized projects had been done jointly with P.E.P., such as the Volga Peace Cruises (yearly since 1982), the Mississippi Peace Cruises in 1986 and 1988, and the Dnieper Peace Cruise in 1988.

Next was George Byer, back on the ballot for trying to establish Friendship Week.

The third nominee was Marian Wright Edelman, founder and president of the Children's Defense Fund, who was known to some in P.E.P. from her days as a Yale law student. She was the nominee exclusively focused on the needs of U.S. children, as P.E.P. continued to break away from its tradition of giving the Award to advocates of international peace and justice. Jesse Jackson was the fourth nominee, for being "the only voice speaking out during the entire Democratic National Convention for ... justice for *all* Americans [and] recognition of the other seven-eighths of the world [and] the evils in our society that foment war. His is the only voice that asks for help for the homeless, the downtrodden, the inner-city."

¹⁴⁷ Used as an epigraph for the Stand for Children March, May 1996

Fifth on the list was Alfred Marder, a New Haven-based peace activist whose primary affiliation was the U.S. Peace Council and its international parent, the World Peace Council. He had endured harsh persecution for his socialist beliefs and his advocacy of U.S.-Soviet understanding during the McCarthy period. He was the initiator and a member of the Peace Commission of the City of New Haven, successful campaigns for divestment of funds invested in South Africa, the Youth March for Peace, and mass participation by New Haven citizens in the 1980 march in New York supporting the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign. He had participated in many other progressive projects, including P.E.P.'s 1988 Dnieper Peace Cruise. He also led the campaign to have New Haven participate in the Peace Messenger Cities program, and he was heading up the group producing the World Peace Messenger Cities Conference in New Haven that September.

The last name was Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, the Peruvian diplomat then serving as Secretary-General of the United Nations. "he was particularly effective in promoting a settlement between Iran and Iraq", wrote the nominator. He received the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of the U.N. peacekeeping forces in 1988. (He would not have accepted anyway that year, since he held office until 1991.)

Just a few votes separated the top four: Marian Wright Edelman, Jesse Jackson, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, and the Soviet Peace Committee. Mrs. Edelman's choice continued the precedent set with the selection of César Chávez the previous year: the Award was no longer limited to leaders of international struggles for peace and justice. She was also the sixth woman and the first African-American to receive the Award.

In January of 1990 Howard Frazier wrote Mrs. Edelman to inform her of her selection, made "because for many years you have devoted yourself to the rights and well-being of children in the United States, in addition to being in the forefront in your support of civil and human rights measures." Howard called her assistant a few weeks later and learned that she was "delighted to accept" the Award on May 27th, when she would be in New Haven to speak to Yale's Class Day. (Her son Jonah was a Yale sophomore who had attended Sidwell Friends School; when he was graduated in 1992, he was awarded the 1992 Alpheus Henry Snow prize for the senior judged to have contributed the most to the Yale community.)

She was also enlisted to speak the following day at the graduation exercises of the Yale Law School, her law alma mater. She also arranged to stay in housing provided by Yale. Dean Calabresi of the Law School wrote to Howard on May 10th, “Marian was a student of mine and is one of the people I most admire.”

Howard secured a list of local civic organizations, with emphasis on those concerned with issues relevant to children, and asked them to help publicize the event.

Marian Wright Edelman

By 1990, as the Reagan-Bush deficits and the Republican-sponsored cuts in social services began to take their toll, the effects on the poor were becoming more evident.

Homelessness was big news, and malnutrition and poverty were creeping back up toward their pre-Great Society levels. U.S. prisons in 1990 held over a million inmates, most African-American or Hispanic—twice as many as in 1980 and more than in the Soviet Union or any other country—yet crime rates re-



mained undiminished. Prison costs per prisoner per year exceeded the cost of a Harvard education; yet construction of jail cells continued at the expense of education, health care, and other budget items.

But it was children who were being hurt the most. As much as any group, children are to their society as canaries are to a coal mine: the early warning signal that something is going wrong. Marian Wright Edelman’s calling has been to make Americans aware that the choices being made by their leaders are hurting the nation’s little ones.

Howard Frazier, in writing about the Award to Mrs. Edelman, wrote:

Recent studies show that one-fourth of our children are living in poverty and suffering from malnutrition, a situation that is inexcusable in the wealthiest country in the world. Marian Wright Edelman is making a great contribution in focusing

the spotlight on the great needs affecting the children of our country. All of us must be concerned about the plight of our children if remedies are to be found.

Marian Wright was born in Bennettsville, South Carolina, the youngest daughter of a Baptist preacher. In her 1995 book *Guide My Feet* she tells how as a girl she felt "wrapped up and rocked in a cradle of faith, song, prayer, ritual, and worship" by parents, community, church, and later by caring adults at Spelman College in Atlanta, the leading college for African-American women.

She spent her junior year in Switzerland, was graduated in 1960 as Spelman's Valdictorian, and went on to Yale Law School on a Whitney fellowship. She won her degree in 1963; that summer she stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial during Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech. In the mid-1960s she became the first African-American woman admitted to the Mississippi Bar. She directed the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund office in Jackson, Mississippi; she remembers giving Robert Kennedy a personal tour to see the malnourished children in the Mississippi Delta.

While there she met Peter Edelman, a Kennedy aide, and they were married. (He later became Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation in the Clinton Administration.) They now have three grown children. *MADEMOISELLE* magazine chose her as "one of the four most exciting women in America, and she was designated the Outstanding Young Woman of America for 1965-66.

She learned to play politics in earnest when Head Start funds were made available to the states in 1965. Mississippi refused to sign up, so Mrs. Edelman helped pull together a citizen's group of public, private, and church organizations to apply for the funds. They were granted, and when Senator John Stennis tried to get Congress to cut off its funding, the twenty-five-year-old Mrs. Edelman led the successful fight in Washington. "That was my first big lesson about government," she says. "There was no one in Washington for these folks, like General Motors had. That was seed No. 1 for the Children's Defense Fund."

In 1968 Mrs. Edelman moved to Washington, D.C., as counsel for the Poor People's March that Dr. Martin Luther King began organizing before his death. She founded the Washington Research Project, a public interest law firm and the parent

body of the Children's Defense Fund (C.D.F.). For two years she also served as Director of the Center for Law and Education at Harvard University, and in June of 1973 began the C.D.F.. In the 1970s she helped sideline a proposal to replace direct Head Start funding with state grants. In 1979 TIME Magazine named her one of its two hundred outstanding American leaders, and in 1984 she won the MacArthur Prize—as Randall Forsberg [GPA '82] did.

She testified before many Congressional committees on behalf of the world's children. The C.D.F. became the only American organization wholly devoted to the rights and welfare of children. Its mission is to educate the nation about the needs of children and encourage preventive investment in children before they get sick, drop out of school, suffer too-early pregnancy or family breakdown, or get into trouble. C.D.F. "seeks to ensure that no child is left behind and that every child has a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, and a Safe Start in life with the support of caring parents and communities." Hillary Rodham Clinton served as Chairman of the organization for many years.

Mrs. Edelman has served on the Board of Trustees of Spelman College, which she chaired from 1976 to 1987. She has authored several books, including *Families in Peril: An Agenda for Social Change*; *The Measure of Our Success: A Letter to My Children and Yours*; and a 1995 book, *Guide My Feet: Meditations and Prayers on Loving and Working for Children*. Her most intimate book, *Guide My Feet* is "a book of heartfelt and tough-minded meditations and prayers for all those who struggle to live with and work for children." The spiritual quality of the book, a spokesperson explained, is "a part of her struggle to re-create this spiritual bedrock in her own family, in her work for America's children, and in her own life today."

She has also written articles and booklets such as "Funds for Children" in 1981; "How the Military Budget Hurts America's Children" in the Summer 1987 *Food Monitor*; and "The Children's Defense Budget, FY 1988: An Analysis of Our Nation's Investment in Children".

In 1981 she told Congress,

Now more than ever, it is clear that our national budget is also a national Rorschach test. We see in it what we are and what we believe in as a people. ...

Children, my primary concern, are the poorest of any age group in America: one in six is poor and one in four is on AFDC (Aid for Dependent Children) at some time during his or her lifetime. ...In cutting this entitlement it should be remembered that...the average AFDC recipient receives \$3.10 a day (\$93.13 a month).

...

It is easy and popular to point to what hasn't worked, but in the course of the civil rights and antipoverty movements we have learned about what does work. Funds must be directed according to that knowledge.

With offices just a few blocks from Capitol Hill, the Defense Fund stands out among youth advocacy groups for its Washington-based organization and strategic coalitions, its many alliances with state and local groups, and its many service-



oriented programs. In the District of Columbia, the Defense Fund has established City Lights, which works with severely troubled adolescents. At what was once the Tennessee farm of *Roots* author Alex Haley, the Fund conducts leadership training sessions. And, often in partnership with Junior Leagues, it runs public education programs throughout the country, exposing business and community leaders to the problems of the young. In the mid-1980s, the Children's Defense Fund helped

focus national attention on the problem of teen pregnancy. In the late '80s, it put together a coalition that was instrumental in the 1990 passage of a multibillion-dollar child-care bill for low-income working parents.¹⁴⁸

“Life as she lives it day by day is a series of battles fought along starkly moral lines,” wrote Elizabeth Gleick in 1996. She is “the single loudest voice on behalf of those too young to speak for themselves.”

Her message to leaders is simple: every time they're about to take a public action, ask, “How will this affect kids?”

¹⁴⁸ Excerpted from Elizabeth Gleick, “The Children’s Crusade: A '60s-style campaign aims to put kids first in this year's budget battles and the presidential race”, *TIME Magazine*, June 3, 1996.

Her assertive stances have not made her the darling of cut-welfare conservatives. One calls her “the leading champion of the welfare state in the U.S. In earlier years, she led the effort to make the welfare state grow; today, her efforts are devoted to prolonging Great Society programs as long as possible.”¹⁴⁹ She has also not won a reputation as a conciliator publishing articles with titles such as her 1990 “Why America May Go to Hell” if welfare programs did not grow.

Yet the public has backed her. Polls taken periodically for years have yielded results similar to those in a 1996 *TIME* poll, in which nearly three-quarters of Americans favored “spending more of your tax dollars on programs to help children,” including two-thirds approval for free immunization shots against disease and nutrition programs for “children who need them”; around half of Americans for health insurance for all children, day-care programs for poor children so their parents can work, providing information and assistance to teens on preventing unwanted pregnancies, prenatal health-care programs “for pregnant mothers who need them”, and even preschool education programs.

Howard wrote in 1990, “Over the years Ms. Edelman has received many awards and honorary degrees. Among the most recent are the Albert Schweitzer Humanitarian Prize, the Radcliffe Medal, and the A.F.L.-C.I.O. Award.” Recipient of an average of eight honorary degrees each spring and mountains of other honors, she may be the most honor-garnering woman in America. She has won many hearts by making her points about the needs of children not always with statistics, but also with stories. One she tells concerns a school teacher named Jean Thompson and one of her fifth-grade students, Teddy Stollard.

On the first day of school, Jean Thompson told her students, “Boys and girls, I love you all the same.” Teachers lie. Little Teddy Stollard was a boy Jean Thompson did not like. He slouched in his chair, didn’t pay attention, his mouth hung open in a stupor, his eyes were always unfocused, his clothes were mused, his hair unkempt, and he smelled. He was an unattractive boy and Jean Thompson didn’t like him.

¹⁴⁹ “Just a Few of the Geniuses”, *Philanthropy, Culture and Society*, a publication of the Capital Research Center, Washington.

Teachers have records. And Jean Thompson had Teddy's. First grade: "Teddy's a good boy. He shows promise in his work and attitude. But he has a poor home situation." Second grade: "Teddy is a good boy. He does what he is told. But he is too serious. His mother is terminally ill." Third grade: "Teddy is falling behind in his work; he needs help. His mother died this year. His father shows no interest." Fourth grade: "Teddy is in deep waters; he is in need of psychiatric help. He is totally withdrawn."

Christmas came, and the boys and girls brought their presents and piled them on her desk. They were all in brightly colored paper except for Teddy's. His was wrapped in brown paper and held together with scotch tape. And on it, scribbled in crayon, were the words, "for Miss Thompson from Teddy." She tore open the brown paper and out fell a rhinestone bracelet with most of the stones missing and a bottle of cheap perfume that was almost empty. When the other boys and girls began to giggle she had enough sense to put some of the perfume on her wrist, put on the bracelet, hold her wrist up to the other children and say, "Doesn't it smell lovely? Isn't the bracelet pretty?" And taking their cue from the teacher, they all agreed.

At the end of the day, when all the children had left, Teddy lingered, came over to her desk and said, "Miss Thompson, all day long, you smelled just like my mother. And her bracelet, that's her bracelet, it looks real nice on you, too. I'm really glad you like my presents." And when he left, she got down on her knees and buried her head in the chair and she begged god to forgive her.

The next day when the children came, she was a different teacher. She was a teacher with a heart. And she cared for all the children, but especially those who needed help. Especially Teddy. She tutored him and put herself out for him.

By the end of the year, Teddy had caught up with a lot of the children and was even ahead of some. Several years later, Jean Thompson got this note:

Dear Miss Thompson:

I'm graduating and I'm second in my high school class. I wanted you to be the first to know. Love, Teddy.

Four years later she got another note:

Dear Miss Thompson:

The university has not been easy, but I liked it. I wanted you to be the first to know. Love, Teddy Stollard.

Four years later, there was another note:

Dear Miss Thompson:

As of today, I am Theodore J. Stollard, M.D. How about that? I wanted you to be the first to know. I'm going to be married in July. I want you to come and sit where my mother would have sat, because you're the only family I have. Dad died last year.

And she went and she sat where his mother should have sat because she deserved to be there. She had become a decent and loving human being.¹⁵⁰

She went on to make the point that there are millions of Teddy Stollards, left out and left back, who

You and I know there are millions of Teddy Stollards all over this nation -- children we have left out and left back, who will never become doctors or lawyers or teachers or police officers or little else -- because there was no Jean Thompson.

The 1990 Award Ceremony

Following the custom, P.E.P. held a dinner before the main event at the Park Plaza hotel, a block from the United Church on the Green. In consideration of Mrs. Edelman's cause, several local representatives of the N.A.A.C.P. were invited, along with the Rev. Cleveland Thornhill, a prominent African-American clergyman who was outspoken in his support for a more progressive U.S. foreign policy. Afterward everyone strolled over to the church through the pleasant graduation day evening.

Attendance was down from the previous year, partly because César Chávez was much more of a legend, but also because it was graduation weekend and Memorial Day weekend.

Howard opened the event by describing the history, aims, and recent activities of P.E.P. He mentioned the pride New Haven felt at being designated by the United Nations as one of sixty-five Peace Messenger cities in the world. He complimented John Daniels, the city's first African-American mayor, for hosting the world conference of Peace Messenger Cities, which would take place that September.

He then introduced Mayor Daniels, mentioning that he would be proposing a Mayor's March on Washington to call attention to urban needs. (The massive national

¹⁵⁰ Recounted by Deval Patrick, Assistant Attorney General in the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department Of Justice, speaking before the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, October 15, 1994, in Birmingham, Alabama.

march that resulted was held during the Presidential campaign in 1992). Howard told the audience, "We in the peace movement consider Mayor Daniels "one of us" and we appreciate his being with us tonight." Mayor Daniels gave an official welcome on behalf of the city, mentioning in particular the importance of meeting the needs of its children.

Howard then introduced the Rev. Alice Perry, a P.E.P. Board member who was associate minister of what Howard called "the Peace Church" in which the ceremony was being held. "Allie is often referred to as the Peace Minister," he said, "because she goes to Nicaragua and other countries on peace missions, participates in peace vigils, and can always be seen whenever peace activities take place. On this past Good Friday, her prayers were being said at the entrance of Electric Boat in Groton, to protest the making of the death-dealing nuclear submarines." (Rev. Perry had been particularly incensed by the decision to name the latest Trident the Corpus Christi. She was arrested for blocking the entrance to the base.) Howard also mentioned she had recently received the Alice B. Hamilton Award from the local chapter of WILPF. Rev. Perry welcomed those assembled to the church, and reflected what was happening to the nation's children as the budget ax was wielded and city funds were cut.

Songs by the Children's Choir of New Haven public school system followed, led by Mary Boyle, Arts/Dance/Drama/Music coordinator.

P.E.P. president Martin Cherniack then made the presentation of the Award and read the inscription he had written for Mrs. Edelman:

*Working for the survival of the family
and against the convenient preachings of
the marketplace, Marian Wright Edelman
has made it easier for Americans to be a
good people. Like Gandhi she has com-
bined tactics with a dream of social justice.
She has aimed very high and touched a
star.*

Presented on the twenty-seventh day of May, 1990

PROMOTING ENDURING PEACE

Martin Cherniack, President

Unfortunately, no record of what Mrs. Edelman said survives. (She wrote Howard that she would send him the text “when I catch my breath”, but a subsequent note from her assistant stated that there was neither typewritten text nor tape recording.) Possibly she echoed something she had said that afternoon, at Yale’s Class Day:

Children must have at least one person who believes in them. It could be a counselor, a teacher, a preacher, a friend. It could be you. You never know when a little love and support will plant a small seed of hope.

After the Award

In March of 1994 Marian Wright Edelman returned again to New Haven and Hartford to mobilize support for the C.D.F.’s “Black Community Crusade for Children”, whose theme was “Leave No Child Behind”. She told school children in New Haven that the nation’s African-American children face the worst crisis since slavery, with homicide now the leading cause of death among African-American males, and the third-leading cause of death for children ages five to fourteen. “Some kids even plan their funerals,” she said.

A soft-spoken but forceful defender of children’s rights, she said, “This is something we need to confront. It is profoundly criminal.” She said that children look to guns, gangs, and peers for the protection and acceptance that adults fail to give them. While the nation’s youth cries out for after-school and weekend programs to neutralize the draw of the streets, Edelman blamed prisons instead. “I’m sick of Rambos and Terminators and video games that teach children how to kill. The country is going to be destroyed by the little children whose lives we’re destroying today.”

A year later she said at New York Theological Seminary “On the eve of a new millennium, the overarching challenge America faces is rebuilding a sense of community and hope and civility and caring and safety for all our children. We must act now to move our nation back from the brink of violent chaos, racial regression, and class warfare Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. warned about. And we must pray that God will guide our feet and America’s feet to mount a crusade across our land to stop the killing and neglect of children, to reclaim our nation’s soul, and to give our children back their hope, sense of security, belief in America’s fairness.”

Since its founding in 1973, the Children's Defense Fund can count some modest gains. Partly because of its pressure on government to do more for children, American students are doing better in such areas as math and science proficiency, and rates of immunizations and infant survival are improved.

"But as America polarizes into a land of rich and poor, the number of children on the losing side is growing at an alarming rate", as Elizabeth Gleik wrote in 1996. A recent report from the Department of Health and Human Services (where her husband now works), the percentage of children in families with incomes less than half of the official poverty level—"extreme poverty"—has doubled in the past ten years to ten percent, which equals over six million children. Twice that number are living in poverty. Child abuse and teen homicide rates are up accordingly.

"Such numbers are not just a snapshot of how we live today", wrote Ms. Gleik.

To experts who understand the trajectory of childhood development, the statistics predict a grim future for American society. As Douglas Nelson, executive director of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, puts it, "It may well be that the nation cannot survive--as a decent place to live, as a world-class power or even as a democracy--with such high rates of children growing into adulthood unprepared to parent, unprepared to be productively employed and unprepared to share in mainstream aspirations."

As a way to focus the national attention on this appalling situation, the C.D.F. organized the Stand for Children rally staged at the Lincoln Memorial on June 1, 1996, with Mrs. Edelman as the keynote speaker and the leader of a growing movement.

"I knew it would take 20 years, 25 years to seed a movement," she says. "You just have to keep planting and watering and fertilizing. And then, when it is time, you do what you have to do. But you have to stand up--win, lose or draw. And it's time."

At the rally, she asked that "every American redefine success by asking how to strengthen family and community values and help the United States regain moral and economic bearings at home and abroad." According to one report. "The standard for success has become personal greed rather than common good. Investing in children, she argues, is essential to change this disturbing trend."

Regardless of how popular that message is with the general public, it evokes resistance from the powerful. One reporter wondered, "How many politicians could win

an election today arguing that the solution to the problems of South-Central Los Angeles is to put everyone on the dole?" Fortune magazine argued that "the spending called for by C.D.F. would make matters worse, not better," by adding to the number of single-parent households.

Mrs. Edelman strikes back. In an interview in 1995 she called the Contract with America "a Trojan horse for a relentless assault on children's programs that leaves non-needy constituencies virtually untouched. Not only is it morally wrong, it is economically wrong."

More and more she has been declaiming "the silence of good people about the injustice of it all." That includes many who were once vocal for government action to meet human needs, including her friends the Clintons. According to TIME, the President nearly nominated Peter Edelman to the Federal district court in Washington, but pulled back to avoid appointing someone "too liberal." Mrs. Edelman has tried to persuade the President to hold the line on Federal support for children; when instead he announced support for a bill that would replace "welfare as we know it" with block grant to the states. The new system would mean that children would no longer have the assurance of a basic "safety net" regardless of where they live.

Returning all power over children to the states reminds her too much of the situation the nation was in when she was a child in the segregated south, and states vied with each other to be the harshest on low-income citizens in the drive to avoid being a "welfare Mecca." To provide for general needs, as it says in the Preamble to the Constitution, "you try to have a national solution."

In November of 1995 she wrote "An Open Letter to the President", which appeared in the WASHINGTON POST, urging the President to reconsider his support for welfare and Medicaid block grants: "Do you think the Old Testament prophets, Isaiah, Micah and Amos--or Jesus Christ--would support such policies?" Give up the Federal role in protecting children, she warned, and "we may not get them back in our lifetime or our children's." Finally she told her old friend, "What a tragic irony it would be for this regressive attack on children and the poor to occur on your watch. For me, this is a defining moral litmus test for your presidency."

She had an ally in Senator Daniel Patrick Moynahan, who learned of White House estimates that the new welfare plan would increase the number of children in poverty by over one million. After Senator Moynahan succeeded in forcing the Administration to disclose the estimate, the President withdrew his support for the plan.

According to TIME, "the Clintons and the Edelmans remained friends. Peter rode Air Force One to Yitzhak Rabin's funeral last fall and stayed up most of the night playing hearts with the President on the trip home."

The urgency to hold back the tide against children made the Stand for Children all the more important to those who are committed to their welfare. The rally received endorsements from nearly three thousand organizations—an astonishing number for any demonstration, including groups such as the YM and YWCA and the Girl Scouts that have never participated in an event like the Stand for fear of seeming sectarian. A Y spokesman said, "Supporting kids shouldn't be a partisan issue."

Like the Million Man March, the event was "less about defining an agenda than about evoking a spirit." It was also about redefining the prevailing mood. "Children are never going to get what they need until there is a fundamental change in the ethos that says it is not acceptable to cut children first," said Mrs. Edelman. "God really did put rainbows in the clouds. Without Newt Gingrich and the incredible threat to everything, we would never have been able to bring folks together in this way. So, in many ways this is the thing that will launch the children's movement."

The "nitty-gritty" of the Stand was coordinated by none other than Jonah Edelman, who had been graduated with honors from Yale in 1992. He had recently returned from studies at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar, earning a Ph.D. in politics.

In 1995 she made a moving plea to place children at the center of every action in families, schools, businesses, and communities. "I fundamentally believe that the neglect of our children, that our failure to invest in and respect all of our children is the moral and economic Achilles heel of this nation," she said.

She supports educating children for the 21st century, but says those children also need to see that they will have jobs and can support families. She denounces budget-balancing measures that would reduce preventive medicine programs for poor children and calls for an end to the violence that kills a classroom full of children every two

days. "Americans must begin to honor children with their deeds and not just their words," she said. "We can't create children's future by destroying their present," she told a conference of high school principals just before the Stand rally in Washington.

This is an incredible moment in history, the beginning of a new century and new millennium. As parents, teachers, as titular world leaders, we hold a tremendous opportunity for good or evil. What will we send to our children, and their children? How will progress be measured over the next thousand years? By kill power? By consumables?

A thousand years ago, the U.S. was not even a dream. There was no printing press, no Magna Carta, no Shakespeare, Chaucer, Bach, or Beethoven. A thousand years from now, will America's dream be remembered--and worth remembering? Will 'all men and women created equal' stand the test of time?

America professes to honor children. What does it mean to stand for children, when they cut WIC and education in the name of helping children? When every two days, a classroom full of children die because of guns? Caring about children doesn't start at age six. Children don't come in pieces.

And we can't just blame the government. It's our government, our leaders, and we must hold them accountable for what they do in our name. Is one hungry baby responsible for all America's ills? For the downsizing of corporations, and export of jobs? Is this baby, born without good prenatal care, the cause or the victim of the widening gap between rich and poor?

I still believe in the inherent fairness of Americans. No one gave anyone a mandate to balance the budget on the backs of children. It is not the American way to cut education, child care, and immunizations, to subsidize the rich.

Note: the following accounts are still in preparation:

1991	George S. McGovern
1992	Ramsey Clark
1993	Dr. Lucius Walker, Jr.
1994	Roy Bourgeois
1995	Edith Ballantyne
1996	New Haven/ León SCP

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Current Biography (various years from 1960-89)

Promoting Enduring Peace

Gandhi Peace Award Recipients 1960-1996

Ch	Awd	E #	Year	Date	Title	First	Last	Affil	Nat	Occ
1	1	① 1	1960	Th 10/13		Eleanor	Roosevelt		U.S.	Pol
	2	2	1960	Th 10/13	Rev. Dr.	Edwin T.	Dahlberg		U.S.	Cler
2	3	3	1961	10/?	Rabbi	Maurice N.	Eisendrath		U.S.	Cler
	4	4	1961	10/?	Rev.	John Haynes	Holmes		U.S.	Cler
	5	5	1962	Th 11/1	Dr.	Linus C.	Pauling		U.S.	Sci
	6	6	1962	Th 11/1		James Paul	Warburg		U.S.	Bus.
	7	7	1963	Th 11/7	Rev. Dr.	E. Stanley	Jones		U.S.	Cler
	8	8	1965-66	We 4/27	Rev. Dr.	A.J.	Muste	FOR	U.S.	Cler
	3	9	9	1967	?		Norman	Thomas		U.S.
4	10	10	1967	Th 10/5	Rev.	William Sloane	Coffin, Jr.		U.S.	Cler
	11	11	1967	Th 10/5	Dr.	Jerome	Davis	P.E.P.	U.S.	Prof
	12	12	1968	Tu 10/8	Dr.	Benjamin	Spock, M.D.		U.S.	MD-ped
	13	13	1970	??	Senator	Wayne	Morse		U.S.	Pol
	14	14	1970	Sa 11/7	Dr.	Willard	Uphaus	WF	U.S.	Prof
5	15	15	1971-72	Th 2/24	Sec-Gen.	U	Thant	UN	Burm	Pol
6			1973-74			Daniel	Berrigan	RESIGNED		
7	16	② 16	1974-75	We 2/5		Dorothy	Day	CWM	U.S.	Saint
	17	17	1975-76	Th 10/21	Dr.	Daniel	Ellsberg		U.S.	Pol
8	18	18	1977-78	Th 1/19		Peter	Benenson	A.I.	U.K.	Atty
		19	" "	" "		Martin	Ennals	" "	U.S.	A.I.
9	19	20	1979	Tu 10/23	Dr.	Roland	Bainton		U.S.	Prof-Rel
10	20	③ 21	1980	Sa 10/18	Dr.	Helen	Caldicott, MBAS	PSR	U.S.	MD-ped
11	21	22	1981	Th 11/12	Dr.	Corliss	Lamont		U.S.	Pol
12	22	④ 23	1982	We 11/24		Randall	Forsberg	NWFC		Acad
13	23	24	1983-84	Th 1/12	Dr.	Robert Jay	Lifton, M.D. Psy	PSR		Prof-Psy
14	24	⑤ 25	1984	Th 10/25	Dr.	Kay	Camp	WILPF		WILPF
15	25	26	1985-86	Tu 4/15	Dr.	Bernard	Lown, M.D.	PSR		MD
17	26	27	1986-87	Fr 4/24	Dr.	John	Somerville	IPPNO		Prof-Phil
17	27	28	1988-89	Th 5/11		César	Chávez	U.F.W.	U.S.	Saint
18	28	⑥ 29	1989-90	Su 5/27		Marian Wright	Edelman	C.D.F.	U.S.	C.D.F.
19	29	30	1991	Fr 11/1	Senator	George S.	McGovern		U.S.	Pol
20	30	31	1992	Fr 10/23	Atty Gen.	Ramsey	Clark		U.S.	Pol
21	31	32	1993	Fr 10/15	Rev.	Dr. Lucius	Walker, Jr.	IFCO	U.S.	Cler
22	32	33	1994	Fr 10/21	Father	Roy	Bourgeois	SOA	U.S.	Cler
23	33	⑦ 34	1995	Fr 10/6		Edith	Ballantyne	WILPF	U.K.	WILPF
24	34		1996	Tu 10/29		New Haven/León	Sister City Proj			
		35			Dr.	Alan	Wright, Ph.D.	NH/L	U.S.	NH/L
		⑧ 36	" "	" "	Dr.	Paula	Kline, Ed.D.	" "	U.S.	STCF

Note: Dual years indicate that the Award decision was made in one year and the Award was actually presented in the following year. Example: 1989-90 indicates that the Award was made in 1989 and presented in 1989.

“Mr. President, I’m not saying we wouldn’t get our hair mussed, but I do say no more than ten to twenty million killed—tops—depending on the breaks.” Gen. Buck Turgidson to President Merkin Muffley in *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Stopped Worrying and Learned to Love the Bomb*, Stanley Kubrick, 1964.

Internet research: from <http://www.albany.net/~swfranc/>

Fellowship of Reconciliation

National Religion and Labor Foundation
 Workers Defense League
 Church Peace Mission
 National Council Against Conscription
 Turn Toward Peace

In 1955, California's Senate Investigating Committee on Education investigated the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR). The Committee's Chairman received a letter from John M. Swomley, Jr., FOR's Secretary, in which Swomley said: "This letter is to point out that our fellowship has had a long and consistent record of not collaborating with Communist or Communist front groups. We are a non-partisan religious pacifist organization." (When the Committee found evidence contrary to Swomley's assertion, the Fellowship distributed Alfred Hassler's "The Anatomy of a Smear", an alleged expose, according to FOR, of "A California legislative committee's attempt to link pacifism with subversion." On November 24, 1915 at Garden City, Long Island sixty-eight persons established an American Fellowship of Reconciliation. Early Fellowship members included Harry F. Ward, Norman Thomas, Abraham J. Muste, Jane Addams, and Emily Greene Balch. Ward, if he never joined the Communist Party, at least became one of the Party's most active and influential fellow travelers. Thomas, who became the six-time presidential candidate on the Socialist Party ticket, spent a lifetime collaborating with the Communists. Muste spent more than thirty years supporting Communist fronts and causes and, at one time, he was national chairman of the now-defunct Workers Party, a Communist party. When the Fellowship was founded in 1915, its initial activity was directed toward opposing the entry of the United States into World War I. Out of the Fellowship's conscientious objectors program, there developed, in 1916, the National Civil Liberties Bureau which was reorganized in 1920 as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). At one time or another, nearly every leading radical in America was an official of the ACLU including: Harry Ward, Roger Baldwin, Louis Budenz, Eugene V. Debs, Felix Frankfurter, Alexander Meiklejohn, Elmer Davis, Roy Wilkins, Norman Cousins, Freda Kirch-

way, Archibald MacLeish, Henry S. Commager, Corliss Lamont, Francis Biddle, John Dewey, Max Lerner, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, and William Z. Foster. In 1918, the Fellowship established its second enterprise: Brookwood Labor College of Kato- nah, New York. Brookwood was Communistic and was heavily subsidized by the Garland Fund which was a major source for the financing of Communist Party enter- prises. In its literature, the Fellowship of Reconciliation also takes credit for the crea- tion of the Workers Defense League(WDL). The House Special Committee on Un- American Activities(75th Congress) reported: "Just as the Communist Party has its defense movement, the International Labor defense, so also has the Socialist Party, the Workers Defense League. The latter organization was formed in May, 1936, by lead- ing members of the Socialist Party.....The national committee of the Workers Defense League is composed of...Socialists and extreme left-wingers...The executive committee of the league is likewise composed of Socialists and extreme left-wingers...Norman Thomas, Socialist Party candidate for the President of the United States, is the real head of the league...". The Workers Defense League describes itself as an "anti- communist and pro-democratic" legal aid society, concerned with political cases and the protection of minority rights. It is true that periodically the WDL has gone through futile motions by protesting against well-publicized and undeniable acts of barbarism perpetrated by Communist regimes. But the real energies of the WDL have been expended on the protection of labor agitators working among sharecroppers, mi- gratory agricultural workers, and merchant seamen. The defense of political undesira- bles, subject to deportation proceedings, and individuals charged with security/loyalty violations have been a major concern of the WDL. In 1948, the California Senate's Un-American Activities Committee devoted its entire annual report to an analysis and enumeration of Communist front organizations. Of the National Council against Con- scription(a FOR appendage), the report said: "Pamphlets of this Communist front are being distributed by the American Civil Liberties Union in Los Angeles. The current Communist Party line is presently directed against military preparedness, and the Communist Party of the United States(CPUSA) is doing everything within its power to keep the United States militarily weak, while it demands that American armed forc- es abroad be returned to the United States.... The committee points out that this type

of Communist front is organized for the purpose of attracting many good American citizens, who, because of religious convictions, are against war at any time. There are many pacifists and members of religious groups who are not disloyal in any sense of the word. This same statement applies with equal validity to many good citizens who were attracted to the American Peace Mobilization and other Communist fronts organized for the purpose of assisting Hitler during his partnership with Stalin for the conquest of Europe. Undoubtedly many of these good people will be innocently attracted to a Communist front such as the National Council against Conscription. The distinction the committee wishes to make is that the record of a substantial number of the members of the National Council against Conscription have indicated in the past their close affiliation with Communist-front organizations operating for Communist purposes and causes. There are no humane or religious purposes being served by Communist organizations in the field. Soviet Russia and its imperialist expansionist policies alone are served while the United States is kept weak and impotent, and, of course, that is the purpose behind the National Council against Conscription." Then, in 1962, the Fellowship established Turn Toward Peace, an "umbrella organization of national peace, labor, public affairs and religious groups." Through TTP, scores of leftist organizations were coordinated on a national level, ostensibly to promote "peaceful non-violence", but in reality their activities agitated and propagandized for world communism. In 1963, Turn Toward Peace listed fifty "initial steps to provide for the establishment of a world government controlled by the United nations." Among the "initial steps" suggested by TTP were: Recognition of Red China and repeal of the McCarran Immigration Act to allow up to one million people from Red China to move to America each year; placement of all U.S. long-range missiles under UN control by 1964; amend the United States Constitution to allow the UN to levy a direct tax on the American people; establish a national security police force under UN control to harass all anti-UN American citizens; and, repeal of the Connally Amendment to permit the World Court to try American citizens if they engage in anti-United Nations activities. The Fellowship's pro-Communist position on foreign policy became very much in evidence, about a year after Fidel Castro had seized Cuba and placed it under his tyrannical, Communist regime. The Fellowship urged that the United States

display a generous and sympathetic attitude toward Cuba by: Immediately rescinding all economic sanctions against Cuba Offering long-term, low-interest loans to Cuba Withdrawing from the United States Naval Base at Guantanamo Acknowledging that the United States has no right to impose its will on Cuba in the matter of political, economic or military ties with the Soviet bloc even though such adherence might pose a "serious threat to world peace." The Fellowship also distributes publications of the American Friends Service Committee and the World Council of Churches. Under such headings as The Bomb - Civil Defense - Disarmament - and, War and Militarism, the classified catalog recommends the extremely leftward slanted writings of a wide assortment of communists, socialists and fellow travelers. It must be remarked that despite the Fellowship's flowery protestations of idealism and assumed mantle of religiosity, its entire history since 1915 to the present has demonstrated a remarkable consistency in its repeated sympathizing with tyrannical and anti-religious regimes. The Fellowship has worked for the identical goals of international Socialism: a radical reorganization of society and the replacement - wherever it exists - of individual capitalism by collective worship. The United Nations, commensurate with a world "peace tax" on American citizens are the conduits by which the Fellowship can best realize their vision for a better world. The shibboleth of "nonviolence" flaunted so ubiquitously by the Fellowship is belied by the violence engendered by Fellowship-sponsored demonstrations against war and defense preparations and in labor and "civil rights" disputes. And the Fellowship makes a mockery of "nonviolence" by its persistent advocacy of disarmament programs for the United States which is precisely what the ever-arming, violence-ridden Communist regimes and United Nations have been promoting through diplomatic channels and especially through private pacifist groups such as the Fellowship. Extracted from The Biographical Dictionary of the Left , by Francis X. Gannon Submitted by the Freedom From Fiats Foundation LINKS: Building Enemies| AFSC| IPS| CNSS| ACLU| CDI| Fulbright| Rhodes| NLG| FRB| Teacher Unions Return to Biographical Sketches of the Left~~~This document was created with the assistance of no one

Abraham Johannes Muste "It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded, not by religionists, but by Christians; not on religions, but on the gospel of Jesus Christ!" - Patrick Henry~~~A.J. Muste was born on January 8, 1885 in Zierikzee, The Netherlands, son of Adriana Jonker and Martin Muste. He came to the United States in 1891 and acquired derivative citizenship in 1896. He was married to Anna Huizenga. He was an alumnus of Hope College(A.B., 1905; A.M., 1909) and Union Theological Seminary (B.D., 1913). He attended the Theological Seminary of the Dutch Reformed Church in New Brunswick, N.J. He pursued graduate studies at New York University and Columbia University. He was the author of *Non-violence in an Aggressive World*(1940). In 1905 and 1906, Muste was a teacher of Latin and Greek at Northwestern Classical Academy in Orange City, Iowa. In 1909, he was licensed and ordained to the ministry of the Dutch Reformed Church in America. From 1909 until 1914 until 1917, he was minister of the Fort Washington Collegiate Church in Newtonville, Massachusetts. In 1918, he was enrolled as a minister of the Society of Friends (Quakers) at Providence, Rhode Island. In 1919, he became involved in labor affairs. In 1920 and 1921, he was general secretary of the Amalgamated Textile Workers of America. From 1921 until 1933, he was the educational director, fund raiser, and teacher at Brookwood College in Katonah, New York. From 1937 until 1940, he was director of the Presbyterian Labor Temple in New York City. From 1940 until his retirement in 1953, he was executive secretary of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. In February 1957, Muste was the head of a delegation of observers who were invited to attend the sessions of the 16th National Convention of the Communist Party. In a report prepared for the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee in March 1957, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover said: "The Communists boasted of having 'impartial observers' cover the convention. However, most of these so-called impartial observers were hand-picked before the convention started and were reportedly headed by A.J. Muste, who has long fronted for Communists and who recently circulated an amnesty petition calling for the release of Communist leaders convicted under the Smith Act. Muste's report on the convention was biased, as could be expected." Two months after Hoover had issued his report on Muste's attendance at the Communist Party Convention, Muste instituted the

American Forum for Socialist Education. Senator James O. Eastland, chairman of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee (SISS), and the subcommittee members wanted to know more. The Subcommittee was interested in the Forum's officers and national committeemen, who were to work for the Forum's purposes. The Subcommittee recognized in the list issued by Muste some well-known names associated with the Communist Party and Communist causes. They included James Aronson, John T. McManus, Russell Nixon, and Harvey O'Connor, who had pleaded the protection of the Fifth Amendment when asked to affirm or deny their Communist Party affiliations. Some names on the Forum's roster had been cited under oath as members of the Communist Party; they included Carl Braden, Russell Nixon, Albert E. Blumberg, Joseph Starobin, and Clifford T. McAvoy. Most of the other names on the roster belonged to individuals easily recognizable as inveterate joiners of Communist fronts and participants in Communist Party enterprises. Muste's protestations against J. Edgar Hoover's allegations and the SISS's interest in the American Forum for Socialist Education can best be appreciated by a review of Muste's extraordinary career in American radicalism. His affiliations with radical groups and individuals and his own personal radical activism eventually spanned more than half a century. In 1912, he voted for Eugene V. Debs. He would later admit that he never cast a vote for a Democrat or a Republican for a major national or state office, and by the 1960's, even the Socialist Party was not radical enough for him. When Muste studied at Columbia University, he met and developed a close and lasting friendship with John Dewey, whose revolutionary educational philosophy was matched by his radical political bent. At Union Theological Seminary, Muste developed an equally close and lasting friendship with Norman Thomas, who, over the years, richly deserved the title of the patriarch of the Socialist Party. When Muste was serving as pastor in Newtonville, just prior to the outbreak of World War I, he assumed the veil of pacifism for the first time. Later in his life, after some fits of public militancy, the veil would be his permanent garb. When the United States entered World War I, Muste's pacifism became intolerable to many of his parishioners and neighboring clergymen, and he resigned his pastorate in 1917. He then began to work on a voluntary basis for the new-born, Red-saturated American Civil Liberties Union in Boston on behalf of conscientious

objectors and draft evaders. It was at the same time that he joined the Quakers. He did not work as a Quaker minister but instead helped to form a Comradeship in Boston of so-called pacifists and very real political radicals - many of them clergymen. In 1919, Muste and his colleagues of the Comradeship became involved in a rather riotous strike of textile workers in Lawrence, Massachusetts. Muste became a leader of the strike and was jailed for the first time for radical activities. The Lawrence episode served as the inaugural of a long career for Muste in America's radical and militant labor movement. From this experience he became adept at recognizing strife and conflict on the American scene, exploiting and expanding upon these opportunities, supplanting the Americanist ideal with the communist appeal. From the Lawrence strike, he moved on to become the general secretary of the Amalgamated Textile Workers, but his complete lack of success caused by zealous pursuit of his political beliefs, thereby neglecting the memberships' grievances, caused him to resign his position after less than two years. In 1924, Muste, in common with so many radical laborites, campaigned for Robert M. La Follette, Sr., the presidential candidate of the Progressive Party. The Progressives had attracted supporters from a broad segment of the right-to-left political spectrum. By this time, however, Muste was at the extreme left of the spectrum as a confirmed Trotskyite Marxist-Leninist. In 1929, Muste became the founder of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action. He became chairman of the group known as Musteites, a "definitely anti-imperialist, anti-militarist and international labor movement." The Musteites were so extreme that they would not tolerate Socialists in their membership. Their principal accomplishment was to instigate violent strikes in North Carolina's textile industry. The Musteites cadres were known as the Unemployed Leagues. With the Brookwood Labor College behind him, Muste established the American Workers Party, which replaced the Conference of Progressive Labor Action. In 1934, Muste's American Workers Party merged with the Communist League of America, the Trotskyites, under the leadership of James Cannon, who had been urged to cooperate with Muste by Leon Trotsky. Out of the merger came the Workers Party of the United States, which had as its avowed purpose "the overthrow of capitalist rule in America and the creation of a workers' state." As a result of Muste's 1936 trip to Europe during which he visited with Trotsky in Norway,

there developed a curious twist in Muste's career. He claimed that as a result of his trip to Europe he had reconverted to Christianity and that he now considered himself a Calvinist Socialist (really!). For almost a decade he had been a minister without portfolio or any visible attachment to any religious practices. Now, however, he advocated a combination of Christian nonviolence and Marxism to change society. At this stage of his career, Muste resumed a relationship with the Fellowship of Reconciliation. In 1916, he had become a member of FOR, a radical, pacifist group that operated under the halo of religious orientation. From 1926 until 1929, while at Brookwood, he served as national chairman of FOR. He left FOR in 1937 to become director of the Presbyterian Labor Temple for three years, and during that time he was reinstated in the Presbytery of New York as a minister. (This would be Muste's last ministerial work, and in the last two decades of his life he seldom attended any church services, but there is no evidence that he ever renounced his claim to the title of clergyman.) In 1940, Muste returned to FOR as executive secretary. After retiring from that position in 1953, he never again held regular employment. As the leader of FOR, Muste became a close and trusted advisor to Martin L. King, Jr., the arch agitator of the 1950's and 1960's. It was Muste who inspired the foundation of the Congress of Racial Equality, which was led by his protégés and for which over a period of several years he was the most productive fund raiser. When Muste ended his regular employment by his retirement from FOR in 1953, he entered a new phase of his career as a gadabout elder statesman of ultra-leftist-pacifism in America and elsewhere. He also became a prominent participant in both obvious and thinly disguised Communist Party enterprises. As early as 1921, he was on the national committee of the Red-controlled American Civil Liberties Union and on the board of directors of the League for Industrial Democracy, one of the most influential of all Socialist organizations in America. He was a vice president of the Red-oriented American Federation of Teachers. He was on the executive committee of the League for Independent Political Action, which was thoroughly Socialist in its personnel and program and of great aid and comfort to the Communist Party. He was on the national committee of the War Resisters League and a contributing editor of its *World Tomorrow*. Muste received the War Resisters League's Peace Award in 1958. He was on the national advisory board of the National

Religion and Labor Foundation (“a Communist front”). He worked hand-in-hand with the Communists to organize the Progressive Miners of America Union. He was a member of the Continental Congress of Workers and Farmers for Economic Reconstruction, a Socialist Party organization that adhered to the Marxist line for abolition of capitalism by a state takeover of all means of production. He was a member of the National Committee on Labor Injunctions, an ACLU project to protect Red labor agitators from legal recourse taken by employers. In 1961, Muste was elected as one of three co-chairmen of a World Council to direct the newly-formed International Peace Brigade. In the 1960’s, Muste devoted a great deal of energy to groups in opposition to United States participation in the Vietnam War. He was a rallying point in such organizations as the Vietnam Day Committee, the Fort Hood Three Defense Committee, the Fifth Avenue Vietnam Peace Parade Committee, the Spring Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam. In countless meetings, parades, and demonstrations he rubbed elbows with every variety of Communist and Socialist, with racial agitators, with duped do-gooders, with street militants, and with frenetic youths who seemed hypnotized by the octogenarian whose capacity for trouble-making and rabble-rousing appeared limitless. In the last year of his life, Muste made two of his most memorable gestures in the name of “pacifism.” In April 1966, he led four of his followers on a trip to Saigon, where they hoped to perform a ritualistic anti-war demonstration. In Saigon, the five agitators were unusually quiet for several days; when they finally began a demonstration the Saigon authorities promptly placed them in custody and they departed from South Vietnam on the first available plane. In December 1966, Muste accompanied three Red-oriented clergymen to Hanoi. The four travelers, on their mission of “peace and sympathy,” received a warm and cordial welcome from North Vietnam’s leading butcher, Ho chi Minh. The North Vietnamese Communists made the most of the opportunity afforded by the visit of the four stooges to reap a propaganda harvest around the world. In Hanoi, Muste also drafted a “peace” message to the American people and an invitation for President Lyndon Johnson to visit Hanoi. On February 11, 1967, less than two months after his return from Hanoi, Muste died at the age of eighty-two, a hero to Communists both at home and abroad. From the Soviet Union, the Soviet “Peace” Committee expressed its condolences to

the American peace movement and cited Muste's courage and adherence to principles in his fight against aggression and injustice. Arnold Johnson of the Communist Party's hierarchy offered the Party's farewell in a sentimental eulogy in the pages of the Worker. He mentioned the Party's "deep sense of loss" at Muste's death, and made due mention of the tremendous cooperation extended to the Party over the years by the "dean of the peace movement." It is indeed to Muste's credit and others of his ilk, that by carrying the "peace" banner in the ages-old Communist tradition, millions of well-meaning Americans were duped and settled for America's first-ever defeat in an international conflict.

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Betrayal at the Top: The Record of the American Civil Liberties Union~~~ The ACLU is widely portrayed by the mass media as an uncompromising defender of our most cherished freedoms. The impression given is of a group so dedicated to protecting the Bill of Rights that they would be willing in 1979 to lose as many as 70,000 of their members through their controversial defense of the right of Nazis to march in Skokie, Illinois. Unquestionably the vast majority of ACLU members have been drawn to the organization by an idealistic response to this image. But on closer examination, a great disparity exists between the group's professed ideals and the work and statements of its leadership. A review of such contradictions can lead to an understanding of why this is the case. The ACLU and The Right to Life Since the Supreme Court's legalization of abortion in 1973, the ACLU has remained the staunchest advocate not only of the mass murder of millions of unborn children, but also of compelling those to whom abortion is morally repugnant to pay for it through public funding. The Union endorses euthanasia or "mercy killing" through so-called "living wills" in which the right to terminate one's own life is delegated to the doctor with the protection of the state. In spite of the Union's insistence on what it calls a woman's "right to control her own body," we find the group consistently absent from defending doctors and patients who are persecuted for choosing nutritional therapies for terminal diseases. The Union's record in defending the civil liberties of mental patients against involuntary commitment to institutions also leaves much to be desired. But most amazingly, in spite of the group's willingness to give the government power to determine when life both begins and ends, the ACLU flatly maintains that there is no crime one can commit so horrible, either for retribution or deference, than capital punishment. ACLU Defends the Soviet Family It would be fair to say that the ACLU has contributed to the attempted undermining of the American family. They have been active in fighting for distribution of often dangerous methods of contraception and abortion to minors without parental approval. While avoiding defense of doctors who recommend nutrition to their patients, the ACLU has pushed for legalization of dangerous "recreational" drugs, not in the free market, but under government monopoly control. In the face of growing evidence of its relationship to child molestation, the ACLU is famous defending all kinds of pornography from the restrictions of local

government, while sanctioning an even more intrusive and impossibly unenforceable "national standard" on obscenity and related matters. And, of course, there is the ACLU's unsuccessful support for that Pandora's box of federal power extensions that was called the "Equal Rights Amendment." In so many of these issues, which include areas in which the Union has in recent years received much publicity, the ACLU claims to be defending the rights of minors as individuals against the wishes of their parents. But when 12-year-old Ukrainian Walter Polovchak in 1980 ran away from his parents in Chicago because he did not want to be forced to return to a life of slavery in the Soviet Union, the ACLU was so moved by his parents "concern," that they took the case for the boy's involuntary repatriation. Apparently for the ACLU, an American child should be free to do anything regardless of the consequences, but a child from behind the Iron Curtain should be refused the chance for a life of freedom. Whose Rights? It may seem incredible that a group like the ACLU would fear the exhibition of Nativity scenes on public property or the singing of "hark the Herald Angels Sing" in public school assembly programs as threats to the First Amendment while turning deaf ears to the pleas of a 12-year-old boy for freedom. But strange conclusions result from the group's tendency to view the concept of rights as pertaining not to all individuals and what they have the right to do, but rather to groups who use government to take away from others the things they think they deserve. Unlike the authors of the U.S. Constitution, the ACLU views our rights as demanding the fruits of another's labor rather than the opportunity to earn them ourselves. The late Ayn Rand correctly pointed out that this really means the right to enslave others to provide what we want. The Union's leaning toward a collectivist view of rights is further illustrated by the fact that that other guide books separately detail the rights of women, gay people, teachers, students, military personnel, veterans, hospital patients, mentally retarded persons, young people, aliens, students, candidates and voters, suspects, prisoners, lawyers and clients, government employees, etc. It's almost as if our rights are defined by our job or sex, or lack of either. ACLU Assaults our Intelligence Agencies Had the ACLU not been around we might not have had the tragedies in Oklahoma City or the bombing at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. Perhaps the best known posturing against Big Brother on the part of the Union consists of its often bewilderingly contra-

dictory positions on personal privacy vs. government surveillance and investigation. The ACLU provided primary leadership for the Left's drive to abolish the House Committee on Un-American Activities (later House Internal Security Committee), the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, the Subversive Activities Control Board, the Attorney General's List of Subversive Organizations, the Internal Security Division of the Justice Department, domestic operations of Military Intelligence and the 1977 Levi Guidelines which crippled the investigative capacity of the FBI. The Saga of Jay Paul In 1982 the ACLU of Southern California sued Los Angeles Police Department for alleged "abuses" committed by the Public Disorder Intelligence Division, a department which had investigated subversion and terrorism for many years. Though initially a fishing expedition to determine what data the department possessed as well as its sources, by 1983 the focus of the attack had become PDID Detective Jay Paul, an acknowledged expert on Communist subversion and terrorism. LAPD had been under outside pressure to destroy its intelligence files and Detective Paul had stored them in his home. These files consisted of many boxes full of public record information, mostly newspaper and magazine articles going back to the 1930's. They were of historical value, possibly useful in ongoing or future investigations and were rescued by Paul from destruction. The ACLU and its liberal political allies in Los Angeles were horrified to discover the collection contained information on their own left-wing activities. In January 1983 Jay Paul was removed from his intelligence capacity and subjected to an exhausting daily interrogation and investigation that would continue almost 18 months. It is not without significance that this action and the subsequent abolition of the PDID stopped the only advance investigation security preparation that could have helped stop terrorism at the 1984 Summer Olympics before it started. Using this suit as a public "cause celebre", in the summer of 1983, the Union pushed mightily for a local Freedom of Information ordinance which Police Chief Darryl Gates told the LA City Council would prevent him from protecting the people of Los Angeles against terrorism at the 1984 Olympics. Fortunately enough concerned citizens packed the council chambers in opposition to this measure that only a very emasculated version of the proposal became law. The ACLU File One reason why some prominent leaders of the ACLU have been so opposed to public and private investiga-

tions of subversion must relate to what such an investigation would reveal about the Union itself. The ACLU was formed out of earlier organizations in 1920 and its Executive Director and moving spirit until 1950 was Roger Baldwin. Before he died at age 97 in 1981, his ideology may have changed, but during the early years of his ACLU tenure there is no doubt where he stood. In the "Harvard Class Book of 1935, spotlighting Baldwin's class of 1905 on its thirtieth anniversary, he was quoted as saying, "I seek the social ownership of property, the abolition of the propertied class and sole control by those who produce wealth. Communism is, of course, the goal." He gave this advice in 1917 to an associate who was forming another group: "Do steer away from making it look like a Socialist enterprise...We want also to look like patriots in everything we do. We want to get a good lot of flags, talk a good deal about the Constitution and what our forefathers wanted to make of this country, and to show that we are really the folks that really stand for the spirit of our institutions." It should not be surprising to note that Baldwin was active during the 1930's in quite a few of the Communist Party's United Front organizations - he was an officer of the Garland Fund, for instance - along with other ACLU leaders including Rev. Harry Ward, Rev. John Haynes Holmes, Clarence Darrow, Scott Nearing, Robert Morss Lovett, Arthur Garfield Hayes, Archibald MacLeish, and Oswald Fraenkel. ACLU leadership also included identified Communist Louis Budenz, Robert Dunn and Corliss Lamont. ACLU activists William Z. Foster and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn would later become leaders of the Communist Party, U.S.A. Since that time, the ACLU's official left-leaning activism has only steadily increased. Some local affiliates of the Union have always led this crusade, such as the Southern California ACLU which had maintained on its Board identified Communist Party operative Frank Wilkinson. While the national ACLU has not been characterized as a Communist front by any state or federal investigation since 1938, any doubt about its becoming a 'staunch defender' of individual rights was put to rest in April 1976, when the ACLU National Board formally reinstated Communist Elizabeth Gurley Flynn "posthumously" in its ranks. Despite this partisanship, the ACLU and its affiliated tax-exempt foundation continue to receive substantial yearly support from the Ford, Rockefeller, Carnegie, Field, and other foundations.~~~Recommended reading: The ACLU on Trial, by William H.

McIlhany, (New Rochelle, New York: Arlington House, 1976) The Tax-Exempt Foundations, by William H. McIlhany(Westport, CT: Arlington House, 1980)

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<http://www.albany.net/~swfranc/afsc.html> American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)~~~ "Revolution then is needed first and foremost in the United States, thoroughgoing revolution, not a mild palliative." The AFSC was formed in 1917 by a group of 14 socialist Quakers to aid draft resisters. AFSC has been penetrated and used by Communists since the early 1920s when it sent Jessica Smith, who later married Soviet spies Harold Ware and John Abt (since the 1950s CPUSA general counsel and a member of the CPUSA Political Committee) to the Soviet Union to determine famine relief needs in Russia exacerbated by civil war and the collectivization of farmland. Since the 1960s, the AFSC has supported revolutionary terrorist groups such as the Vietcong, Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and the Central American Castroite groups. The theory behind AFSC's support of terrorist "national liberation movements" was outlined by Jim Bristol in a pamphlet published by AFSC in 1972 and continuously reprinted entitled "Non-violence: Not First for Export." Because AFSC's leadership role in organizing not only support for terrorist revolutionary groups, but in the past campaign to disarm America initiated through the USSR's covert action apparatus for political warfare, a closer look at AFSC's justification of violence is appropriate. In the AFSC pamphlet, Bristol presents the totalitarian revolutionary goal in the most glowing terms as a utopia: "a human society where the worth of the individual will be recognized and each person treated with respect....Land reform measures will be enacted....Education will be provided for every member of the society;....There will be employment for all. Discrimination because of race, colour or creed will end. Universal medical care will be provided." [If this all sounds strangely familiar, don't feel alone, these are all planks from the Communist Manifesto]. AFSC's pamphlet asserts that the United States and other Free World countries are guilty of a bizarre "terrorism" which it calls the "violence of the status quo" and irrationally defines this in the broadest possible terms not only as every possible social ill, but also personal or social discomfort. In the words of the pamphlet, this "violence of the status quo" is: "the agony of millions who in varying degrees suffer hunger, poverty, ill-health, lack of education, non-acceptance by their fellow men. It is compounded of slights and insults, of rampant injustice, of exploitation, of police brutality, of a thousand indignities from dawn to dusk and through the night." AF-

SC's pamphlet excuses terrorism in the following terms: "terrorism...repeatedly...is used to signify violent action on the part of oppressed peoples in Asia, Africa, Latin America or within the black ghettos of America, as they take up the weapons of violence in a desperate effort to wrest for themselves the freedom and justice denied them by the systems that presently control their lives.

"before we deplore terrorism, it is essential for us to recognize whose 'terrorism' came first....It is easy to recognize the violence of the revolutionary when he strikes out against the inequities and cruelties of the established order. What millions of middle-class and other non-poor fail to realize is that they are themselves accomplices each day in meeting [sic] out inhuman, all-pervading violence upon their fellows." After this justification of the concept of class warfare, which makes "permissible" terrorist attacks on civilians since they are part of the "oppressive class," the AFSC pamphlet says that U.S. activists should not concern themselves with what sort of violent tactics revolutionaries utilize to achieve their ends. Instead, they should work to disarm the United States and for economic warfare against the U.S.'s "oppressive" allies. In its words: "Instead of trying to devise non-violent strategy and tactics for revolutionaries in other lands, we will bend every effort to defuse militarism in our own land and to secure the withdrawal of American economic investment in oppressive regimes in other parts of the world." The AFSC pamphlet concludes with a call for revolution in the United States, saying: "Revolution then is needed first and foremost in the United States, thoroughgoing revolution, not a mild palliative." The director of the AFSC's Disarmament Program resurrected in the mid-1970s as a complement to the international disarmament campaign was Terry Provance, a World Peace Council(Soviet-controlled) activist and founding member of the U.S. Peace Council. Accompanied by two foreign Communist WPC activists, Nico Schouten, leader of the Netherlands "Ban the Neutron Bomb" organization, and East German Peace Council head Walter Rumpel, Provance addressed a Mobilization for Survival rally at the U.S. Capitol in October, 1979. AFSC operates a lobbying arm, the Friends Committee on National Legislation(FCNL). Its focus and energies play a key role in developing strategy for pressure on Congress against the U.S. defense budget, and particularly against development or deployment of new weapons systems. Another AFSC project, the National

Action/Research on the Military/Intelligence Complex(NARMIC), served as the AFSC's "intelligence-gathering arm." NARMIC works closely with the Institute for Policy Studies(IPS), the North American Congress on Latin America(NACLA), a pro-Cuba research group, and other anti-defense and armament research organizations.

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The World Congress of Intellectuals for Peace was created in 1948. Its first congress in Worclow (Poland) attracted many influential scientists and writers from around the world to its campaign against the cold war and the threat of a nuclear war. The organization altered both its name (becoming the World Peace Council) and its orientation in 1949 in an effort to broaden its appeal. Its influence became considerable in the 1950s, and its petitions were endorsed by millions of sympathizers throughout the world. The United States government, however, was hostile to the goals of the World Peace Council, and required that the WPC's American branch, the American Peace Crusade, comply with the Subversive Activities Control Act.

The files for the WPC (1950-56) reflect both Robeson's participation in it and the broad scope of the organization. Among the papers are correspondence between Robeson and the staff of the UFF, Jean Laffitte, general secretary, and other officers of the WPC; copies of messages read by Willard Uphaus and Paul Robeson on behalf of the WPC to the United Nations Security Council (incomplete, 1951); statements by various delegates to the second congress of the WPC in 1950, and selected copies of the Bulletin of the World Peace Council.

The world was at war. The United States was preparing to join the conflict, but without full public support. A variety of labor and women's organizations, hoping to avert the nation's engagement, expressed their dissenting views through broadsides, public meetings and demonstrations. Among them was the American Union Against Militarism (AUAM), established in 1913 by a group of social reformers and radicals that included Roger Baldwin and Crystal Eastman. Initially, the AUAM, whose top leaders were well connected in Washington, lobbied for neutrality and worked to influence public opinion through publications that attacked the draft and military preparedness. Its radical members, however, argued successfully for the group to intensify its activism, including, in 1915, a "Truth About Preparedness Campaign" of public meetings and press dispatches that attracted considerable publicity and new members to the AUAM. Once the nation entered World War I, government repression and hostility toward dissent increased. Conscientious objectors faced prosecution and vigilantism. And when anti-war activists dared exercise that most basic of rights -- the right to express their beliefs in public -- they faced assault, jail and worse, especially if they were foreign-born. My own anti-war, Yugoslavian-born grandfather was made to stand against a courthouse wall to be spat upon by passersby. How would the AUAM respond? One faction, led by Baldwin and Eastman, regarded the perennial defense of free speech, in peace and war, in good economic times and bad, as the key to preserving all other freedoms. Others argued that national unity in the war effort was paramount, and that the AUAM should abandon its defense of conscientious objectors and protesters' free speech rights. Refusing to sacrifice freedom on the altar of temporary national goals, the Baldwin/Eastman faction decided to establish a separate National Civil Liberties Bureau. The Bureau, soon to be reorganized and renamed, incubated the vision of a vehicle for fulfilling the promise made by the Declaration of Independence 144 years before: the promise that for all time, in all seasons, Americans would be free from majoritarian and governmental tyranny, free to speak their minds and equal before the law. In January 1920, exemplifying the adage that "necessity is the mother of invention," the American Civil Liberties Union was born. Present at the founding were, among others: Jane Addams and Helen Keller, social reformers and women's suffrage advocates; pacifist and feminist Jeanette Rankin; clergymen Nor-

man Thomas, John Haynes Holmes and Harry Ward; the African American poet and activist James Weldon Johnson; radicals **Scott Nearing** and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn; attorneys Arthur Garfield Hays, Felix Frankfurter and Morris Hillquit; labor leaders Duncan McDonald and Henry Linville, and publisher Oswald Garrison Villard. The new ACLU's agenda was full, indeed. There were threats to freedom of speech, assembly and the press, to the rights of striking workers, African Americans, immigrants and those who had refused to serve in World War I. Highlights from its weekly "Report on Civil Liberties Situation" evoke the first year of ACLU work: On October 14, 1920, a mob confronted a Farmer-Labor Party delegation in Washington State, "forced them to salute the American flag" and prevented them from holding a street meeting; on November 2, a Russian chemist was arrested in Illinois "while distributing handbills claimed by the police to be 'inflammatory,'" and in Florida six black men were lynched by hanging and burning, while two white men were fatally shot, in the wake of a black man's attempt to vote "after he had been refused the privilege on the ground that he had not paid his poll tax." Regarding California, the ACLU called for special efforts "to counteract the exceptional power of reaction there." The early battles, of course, foretold a protracted struggle that today requires new efforts to repel old dangers. That first assemblage of distinguished patriots well understood what has been confirmed repeatedly over 75 years: that civil liberties victories don't stay won. Thus, the priorities set in 1920 -- free speech, religious liberty, fair trials, police accountability, racial equality -- remain as central to our work as ever.

In their first annual report, Roger Baldwin and his colleagues wrote: "[T]he mere public assertion of the principle of freedom in the words or deeds of individuals, or weak minorities, helps win it recognition, and in the long run makes for tolerance and against resort to violence." Out of that faith evolved a proud legacy of rights vigorously defended, nurtured and advanced. Acting alone or working with other groups, ACLU lawyers and clients have created a body of law that attests to both the utility and moral grandeur of our institutional mission -- which is to activate the most traditional American values: liberty, justice and equal opportunity for all.