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November, 2015

OUR VISION: We envision a future in which countries work together to abolish war, protect universal human rights and freedoms, foster sustainable development, and solve related problems facing humanity that no country can solve alone. This vision requires the involvement of informed world citizens to create and maintain effective democratic global institutions that will supplant the law of force with the rule of law while respecting the diversity and autonomy of national and local communities.

OUR MISSION: We are a membership organization working to build political will, promoting global citizenship and a new spirit of sharing, and devising initiatives to promote our vision. We undertake our mission by organizing educational events, communicating global concerns to public officials, collaborating with globally engaged organizations, and disseminating proposals to reform and strengthen the United Nations and other international institutions, including the creation of new agencies when necessary.

**2015, the 70th Anniversary of the United Nations
A Year to Affirm the Global Community**

**MINNESOTA'S UNITED NATIONS MOVEMENT
WHEN THE PEOPLE LEAD, LEADERS WILL FOLLOW
By Jim Nelson**

I grew up in South Minneapolis and attended Roosevelt High School. In high school I first became aware of what we called “problems of democracy” and the work of the United Nations. I was a mischievous lad and made many disciplinary trips to the Assistant Principal, **Dr Mercedes Nelson**. Dr Nelson meted out consequences for student’s misbehavior but also tried to inspire students to become productive citizens.

Dr Nelson was an early advocate of women’s active participation in civic affairs such as the League of Women Voters and the United Nations Association of MN. Dr Nelson would often point with admiration to the work of another local pioneering woman, **Fanny Brin** who visited our school.

Fanny Brin became a powerful model for my own civic involvement. Although she was born in Romania, she seemed very Minnesotan. She graduated from the University of Minnesota and taught for a while in city schools. Brin, the mother of 3 children, never disdained the domestic role in her family. Yet she found great energy for her tireless public advocacy.

Fanny Brin worked through clubs and civic organizations to promote structures for disarmament and peace. Over the course of her active life Brin used her involvements in women’s groups (National Council of Jewish Women) , combined with her gifts as a public speaker to further her cause. In 1944 she called together thirty-six women’s groups to form the Women’s UN Rally to promote permanent structures for maintaining the peace. A high point of her career was being chosen as consultant to the US delegation to the 1945 conference in San Francisco that established the United Nations.

Do you know that Minneapolis was once considered a site for the United Nations? An ambitious proposal was crafted by Minneapolis Mayor Hubert Humphrey and Minneapolis businessman, **York Langton**. York, who was originally from Pembina, North Dakota, had become a very successful businessman. Through disciplined hard work he rose to become an executive in the wholesale hardware industry. During World War 2 he became a frequent speaker in favor of a strong international system. A local organization called the Association for the United Nations was founded



Jim Nelson and York Langton, undated, courtesy of Jim Nelson.

in Minnesota in 1946 and York was president for eight consecutive years. **Eleanor Roosevelt** was a speaker at the United Nations Rally in 1953. She returned in subsequent years to help create more permanent organizations to promote the work of the United Nations. Over time the UN Rally became an annual celebration.

During the formative years of the United Nations, different individuals and groups emphasized different qualities of international organization. York Langton belonged to one persuasion of UN supporters who favored a very strong world organization. He favored a “federal model” where individual states would delegate specified authority to a world organization. The so-called “federalists” organization established in 1947 placed great emphasis on enforceable law. Pierce Butler, Jr, a St Paul attorney was a leading advocate and articulate spokesman. Pierce carefully crafted public addresses and persuasively presented the compelling advantages of a law based society. Families with whom I became most familiar included airline pilot **Ronald McLaughlin** and his vibrant wife, **Clare** ; and business executive **Stan Platt** and his wife, social worker and civic leader, **Martha**. Minneapolis businessman **Lynn Elling** and wife **Donna** worked tirelessly, and still works, to promote "world citizenship" by producing quality films, engaging public figures to endorse Declarations of World Citizenship and tirelessly educating young people by promoting "peace sites" in scores of schools and other institutions. [Find 1972 film “Man’s Next Giant Leap Lynn Elling” at YouTube.com].

I became active during the dark days of the Vietnam conflict in the 1960s. Although the Vietnam War was a dismal period that touched my own family, I was uncomfortable merely protesting the violence of that era. I was looking for ways to contribute to a more peaceful and healthy world. I am grateful to so many mentors who encouraged me to work in the United Nations movement.

The creation of the United Nations was a great achievement but also a mere milestone toward greater goals. It is a struggle for healthier world that will continue after we are gone. Fanny Brin would quote a Talmudic sage; “It is not incumbent for us to finish the work but neither is it permitted for us abandon it”

Perhaps I always remember York Langton’s compelling United Nations invocation; **“When the People lead, Leaders will follow”**

A BIT OF HISTORY: THE MINNESOTA PEACE AND JUSTICE COALITION

By Louise Pardee

The Minnesota Peace and Justice Coalition was unique. From modest beginnings with a few groups, a borrowed desk and a part-time coordinator, it expanded in a decade to include more than 100 groups that encompassed a range of issues. In fact, it became the longest-running multi-issue coalition in the country.

Early in 1983 a dozen or so groups began to meet, initially to explore how we could combine our efforts to be more effective in confronting the very real nuclear threat. Among them was the World Federalist Association, represented by Louise Pardee, then president of the Minnesota chapter, and her husband Ned, a long-time Federalist and peace activist. Others were the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, the Nuclear Freeze, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, Clergy and Laity Concerned, the United Nations Assn., and the Central America Resource Center.

By spring of 1983, we were publishing a twice-monthly Calendar of Events, and holding monthly meetings to discuss goals and strategies. We had no models for this kind of work: we were inventing the Coalition as we went along. Ginger Ehrman, our part-time coordinator, helped keep it all together with her creativity and organizing skills. At first, our goals were simply networking and supporting one another. We also maintained a list of media contacts and organized workshops on media relations and fundraising.

But we soon began to understand that all issues are connected. You cannot have peace without justice. Thus, our mission expanded to education and action. This included major daylong conferences on the Middle East; U.S.--U.S.S.R Relations; Racism; Militarism and the Economy; and the United Nations. The latter was co-chaired by Louise Pardee. Each member group was invited to explore the ways in which their issues connected with the work of the UN and to prepare a workshop accordingly. We had about 25 such workshops that day and nearly 200 in attendance. Our keynote speaker was John Anderson, former presidential candidate (Independent).

Other issues of importance were Native American fishing rights; education about Native American history during the Columbus Quincentennial in 1992, supporting union workers striking in Austin, and opposing wars supported by the US government in Central America. We also had an action plan to mobilize rallies in the event of some military action. Many times we gathered at Peavey Plaza in downtown Minneapolis to rally and march.

Another notable success was joining with member groups and Parliament Management Co. to develop the Meridel LeSueur Center for Peace and Justice in 1987, where we had an office, a full-time Director and three other staff members.

What happened to it? The most difficult problem was losing financial support as the Cold War ended. Staff changes and some internal problems all combined to make it a formidable challenge to continue. But we had served the cause of peace and justice well and faithfully, and perhaps our day had passed. Could there ever be another like it?

HEARING THE VOICE OF THE 'OTHER' FORUM

By Gail Hughes, President, CGS-MN

In a conflict situation, the first step - one that's surprisingly often overlooked - is to get the perspective of the conflict from the 'enemy' - the 'Other'. If we hear that a national leader is a Bad Guy, or that a certain country or group are Terrorists, the first thing those who seek peace should do is to find out what the designated enemy has to say.

If there is to be hope for a peaceful solution, global citizens need to understand the importance of this step; we need to know how to find the voices of particular 'Others' directly from them; and we need to listen with an open mind. Only then will we be in a position to compare 'official stories' and assess the situation. Those who wish to wage war will attempt to block this sort of fair-minded communication. We may be accused of being unpatriotic, or of 'siding' with the enemy. However, if we are unwilling to take this necessary first step, we will be unable to devise any well-founded subsequent steps.

A number of Third Thursday Forums this year will address the theme of "Hearing the Voice of the 'Other'". At the September Forum, **Jeffrey Broadbent** explored contrasting views on climate change, as reflected in newspapers around the world. In October, **Mnar Muhawesh** gave us some insights into the perspectives of Muslims and others,

conveyed through MintPress News. In the November 19 Third Thursday, **August Nimitz** will convey voices from Cuba in regards to recent changes in U.S.-Cuban relations. [Details on all programs always found at <http://www.globalsolutionsmn.org/>]. These sessions are designed to help us understand contrasting perspectives, and also to learn where we can go to hear from these 'Others' on an ongoing basis. Check our website for information about them, and for possible video recordings.

I hope to see you at these Forums. Also, add your own voice! Contact me by phone or email, or send a message to our website to start a conversation.

WORKABLE WORLD CONFERENCE REPORT AND THANKS

By Joe Schwartzberg, CGS Board Member and Director, The Workable World Trust

As many readers of this Newsletter are aware, The Workable World Trust sponsored a "**Creating a Workable World**" conference on October 9-10 at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota*. It featured a stellar group of presenters from as far away as Trinidad and Germany and had registrants from many parts of the United States and Canada. Among the 220 or so persons who attended all or part of the conference, close to half were students, five of whom were essay contest winners sharing their thoughts on how to promote a more workable world. Special treats for the conference goers were the interludes of Persian music provided by CGS's own Maryam Yusefzedah and her accompanist, Tim O'Keefe, as well as a sneak preview of a feature-length film, **The World is My Country**, about the amazing career of World Citizen #1, Garry Davis. Also noteworthy was a student brainstorming session following the conference proper; we'll see what comes of it.

The conference proceedings including amplified versions of all the featured conference presentations and the student essays as well is being prepared and we'll let you know when it is published. It could prove to be a good CGS recruiting tool.

A conference as large and diverse as the one on Creating a Workable World takes an awful lot of planning and volunteer contributions, much of which came from students. Several dozen people were involved and the Minnesota Chapter of Citizens for Global Solutions played a particularly important role. My heartfelt thanks to all of you who pitched in particular, thanks are due to Nancy Dunlavy, who serves in two capacities, as Secretary of CGS and as my Administrative Assistant in the Workable World Trust. Without her incredible organizational skills, we couldn't have pulled off our amazing two day undertaking. Stay tuned for further news.

* - **More information about the conference at <http://www.workableworld.org/>. Video of all speeches at the conference will be online at this site as early as October 26, 2015.**

WHO IS "AMERICA"? SOME CANDID OBSERVATIONS FROM ONE WHO OBSERVED US. By Ehtasham Anwar, Pakistan

Through the eyes of media, rightly or wrongly, I had always seen the United States as an aggressive country, a war monger nation, and the biggest obstacle to my dream of a dream world—a world free of hunger, disease and war.

I also believed the US citizens were too mired in their own worldly pursuits that they did not have time to attend to what the US government was doing elsewhere in the world in their name and with their tax money. They either endorsed or, at best, remained indifferent to the US aggression and highhandedness abroad. Their heart, if at all it was, did not beat for the humanity at large. They were thus equally to be blamed for the death and misery that their government brought to people in many parts of the world every now and then.

And then I got an opportunity to travel to the United States and live among, and interact with, the citizenry. Myths were shattered. Concepts were changed. I met some of the best persons in my life in the United States. They were as humane, if not more, as anyone else on the globe. Overwhelming majority disapproved war. They too felt disturbed over the US hegemonic designs. They too worked for the cause of peace. They too wanted a world full of happiness and joy, not only for them but for others too.

Where then was the disconnect? My confusion compounded. With so many good people, why was there no impact seen on the US policies? Was the church and the clergy playing its due role? Those who were working for peace failed to inspire their own families, how could they expect to impact the US policies? What were the obstacles? Way forward? Messages?

My quest led me to a journey—a journey through the hearts and minds of the common Americans. During my nearly a year-long stay in Minnesota, I talked to people from all cross sections of the society: those who had given their lives to the cause of peace; those who had taken part in, and personally seen the horrors of, the World War II and the Vietnam War; those who had participated in the civil rights movement; those who were well off; those who belonged to less privileged segments of the society; those who were the academicians, and had been keeping an eye on, peace and related issues all around the world; those who claimed to have belonged to the inner circles of the US security establishment; those who spoke from the pulpit; those who used arts as a weapon for peace; the men; the women; the young; the old; the rich; the poor; the white; the people of color.

Not all of my questions were satisfactorily answered, yet, at least, I got a clue to what they were thinking. I decided to compile all my work—the interviews—in the form of a video ‘Peacemakers of Minnesota’, with three aims in mind: Firstly, to pay tribute to those who had virtually given their lives to the cause of peace; secondly, to archive their thoughts and achievements for the posterity; and finally, to help those who would want to work for peace by equipping them with greater insight into the thought process of the citizens of the sole superpower of the world for the key to global peace lies with the US citizens.*

Wish me, and them, a very good luck.

* - The videos can be accessed at <http://www.outsidethewalls.org/blog/2015/10/26/>. They are on Facebook, so if you do not have Facebook, best to ask someone who does. Ehtasham Anwar is the Facebook account.

OTHER ITEMS TO NOTE

1. **NEWLY COMPLETED 90 MINUTE FILM**, seen at Workable World Conference, not yet released: **“World is My Country”**, story of World Citizen Garry Davis. More info <http://futurewave.org/films.html>
2. **NEW. Sara Kirschenbaum 100 Letters for Peace** project <http://100lettersforpeace.com/>
3. **ONGOING**. From May 1, 1968, till March 27, 2012, the UN Flag flew at Hennepin County Plaza in Downtown Minneapolis. The continuing story at March 5&27, 2013 at <http://www.outsidethewalls.org/blog/>
4. **ONGOING POST ON THE UNITED NATIONS AT 70**: Jan. 1, 2015 <http://www.outsidethewalls.org/blog/>

A BRIEF EDITORIAL COMMENT

By Dick Bernard, Global Solutions MN Vice-President

York Langton’s comment – lead in this newsletter – **“when the people lead, the leaders will follow”** - is a brilliant call to action, unfortunately very seldom followed. In the wake of WWII, the founding of the United Nations was facilitated by citizen action. People world wide were sick and tired of war as a solution to human problems.

Of course, as leaders know, people have short memories, and little endurance, and it is so easy to return to the tried and true, however negative that may be. I saw a particularly striking analysis of this in a summer edition of the American Legion magazine (yes, as a veteran, I am voluntarily a member). The Legion tends to celebrate War, and in this edition, as I tallied the score sheet, it was only the first post-war year – the year the UN was charted – that failed the cut of “wartime” (All the rest was filled: occupying Haiti 1915-34, for instance; the “Cold War”; War on Terror, etc.)

I think Ehtasham Anwar (above) correctly catches the average American as peace-loving. But individually and collectively we drop the ball for all of the reasons we can individually recite, starting with “I can’t do anything about it anyway.”

York Langton and his activist friends “back then”, saw challenges as opportunities, and quite obviously took on the challenge as people speaking. Is it worth hoping for us to do the same? The task is not easy – it is much more than just signing a petition, or raising a complaint about what Obama (or anyone else) isn’t doing. Peace and Justice are in our court, as individuals. And to achieve it we need to move beyond our personal comfort zone.

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All issues archived at

<http://www.globalsolutionsmn.org/>

Where's there a will, there's a way
Old English Proverb

THIRD THURSDAY GLOBAL ISSUES FORUM

Free and open to the public

Plymouth Congregational Church (Jackman room, lower level), 1900 Nicollet Ave S, Minneapolis. Abundant free parking in lot on Franklin Avenue adjacent to Church, enter building from lot on LaSalle Ave side.

More detailed bios of all speakers can be seen at <http://www.globalsolutionsmn.org/>

Thursday, November 19, 2015, 6:45-8:45 p.m.

Title: Discussion of the changes in Cuban – U.S. Relationship

Presenter: Dr. August Nimtz will give his views about recent developments in Cuba and the perspectives of Cubans regarding the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with the U.S. Nimtz is a Professor of Political Science, African American Studies, and African Studies at the University of Minnesota. He is also a member of the U's Academy of Distinguished Teachers.

Our Board: Dr. Gail Hughes, President; Dick Bernard, Vice-President; Nancy Dunlavy, Secretary; Dennis Dillon, Treasurer; N. John Borgen, Margaret Esslinger, Kristi Rudelius-Palmer, Dr. Bharat Parekh, Dr. Joseph Schwartzberg, Olivia Von Gharath, Maryam Yusefzedah

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Your financial support is needed: Suggested donations: \$10 students, \$30 individuals, \$40 couples.

Checks to "Citizens for Global Solutions" mailed to Dennis Dillon, 210 W. Grant St #414, Minneapolis 55403.