

Global Peace Services USA

...an idea whose time has come

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Welcome from John Eriksson

A warm welcome to all readers of the inaugural edition of our Newsletter! And welcome on board with us as we embark on a journey toward realizing the vision of a world where conflict is transformed and transcended through a combination of creativity, service and faith. Not that we are discovering anything new -- our heroes are those leaders through the ages who have discovered and lived the ways of proactive nonviolence. However, we do believe that the present age contains the seeds of a worldwide appreciation of the truths understood and practiced by these heroes on a broader and more profound scale than at any time in history. We see Global Peace Services USA as a way of linking with kindred individuals and groups here at home, but we also believe that the present age of instant global communication presents an unprecedented opportunity to create meaningful linkages with kindred movements on a global scale. Realizing a culture of nonviolence requires efforts on many fronts. Our core vision has been to create here in the U.S., in harmony with similar efforts elsewhere, a professional peace service by promoting education and skills-training for men and women based on a philosophy of active nonviolence. Developing and promoting suitable curricula

and service and placement opportunities in institutions of higher education are among the important requisites for realizing this vision. Lasting transformation requires working with a much broader range of institutions. The GPS Working Group descriptions in this Newsletter identify some of the institutions that we think are critical. We invite you to become an active partner of one or more of these Groups. Above all, we welcome your joining us in bringing to life ... an idea whose time has come. ■ *John Eriksson currently serves as President of the GPS-USA Board of Directors.*

Special Thanks!

In response to our first distribution of the new GPS brochure, we were delighted to receive many generous contributions.

Many people also responded with words of support and encouragement for the vision and mission of Global Peace Services USA. Thank you. ■

Croatian/Swedish Project Awarded Major Grant

A collaborative project, Building a Democratic Society based on a Culture of Nonviolence: Peacebuilding in Eastern Croatia has received a grant of approximately a million dollars from the European Union. Five to seven educated and trained multi-ethnic, international peace teams will work in local communities in an area of Croatia neighboring Serbia. Interactive learning methods will enable people and organizations of the region to deal with post-war wounds, existing problems, old and new conflicts. Special methods of empowerment and capacity-building will be used to enable the local people to create the social change they seek. Mary Evelyn Jegen went twice to Sweden to help with the development of the curriculum for this project and also spent some weeks in Croatia, interviewing members of the Center for Peace, Nonviolence and Human Rights in Osijek, Croatia, a major partner in the project. ■

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Global Peace Services USA The Founding Generation

We see readers of this first newsletter as founders of this new organization that embodies an idea whose time has come, GPS-USA. If you have not already joined, please use the application form enclosed in the brochure. We are counting on you to send us the names and addresses of possible new members, as well as your ideas for the growth of our new organization.

John Eriksson holds BA and MA degrees in philosophy and economics, respectively, and a Ph.D. in economics from the University of California at Berkeley. He taught at Williams College for six years before joining the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) where, before retiring in 1995, his last two positions were as Director of the USAID Mission in Bangkok, Thailand from 1986-1990, and Director of the Center for Development Information and Evaluation from 1990-1995. Subsequently, his consulting assignments have included leading an evaluation of the emergency response coordinating unit, "ACT" (Actions by Churches Together) of the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches. Dr. Eriksson is a member of the American Economics and American Evaluation Associations, the International Development Ethics Association and the Council of Saint Stephen Lutheran Church in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Mary Evelyn Jegen, SND holds an MA in Religious Studies and a Ph.D. in medieval history. For the past twenty years she has combined peace movement activities and writing with part-time teaching in a graduate program at Creighton University, and in an adult education program in Washington DC. She has been national chair of the American Fellowship of Reconciliation, national coordinator of Pax Christi USA, and vice-president of Pax Christi International. Since 1989 she has worked on GPS-related projects in Sweden and Croatia, and has lectured on GPS in the United States, England, Belgium, Netherlands, and Germany. She is

author of four books, including Sign of Hope (1996), based on her study of the Center for Peace, Nonviolence and Human Rights in Osijek, Croatia.

William (Bill) Price is Director (1978 to present) and Co-founder of World Peacemakers and a member of the Church of the Saviour, Washington, D.C. He received a Ph.D. in physics from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. From 1963 to 1974, Bill was Executive Director of the U.S. Air Force Office of Scientific Research, his last position in a three-decade career working for the U.S. Department of Defense. He is the author of Nuclear Radiation Detection



(McGraw-Hill, 1955, 1964), editor of the World Peacemaker Quarterly (1978 to present), and author of several study guides and papers helping combine Christian faith with the pursuit of national and world security.

Mindy Reiser is a sociologist interested in international development, education and social justice. She holds a Ph.D. in Social Policy from Brandeis University and Master's Degrees in International Affairs and Journalism from Columbia University. She taught sociology at Regis College and Northeast-

ern University and has served as a Public Information Officer with the United Nations. She served on the staff of the Council for International Exchange of Scholars, and in 1994-95 worked in Kazakhstan directing public opinion research under a contract from USAID. She is currently a Senior Research Consultant for several projects with the U.S. Department of Education. Mindy is a member of the Board of Trustees of American Jewish World Service, has served as Treasurer of the New England Regional Office of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), and has been a member of the Executive Committees of the New England and Mid-Atlantic AFSC Regional Offices.

Tricia Sullivan brings experience in community organizing, activism and higher education to the Global Peace Services movement. After receiving her Master's degree in Occupational Psychology at the University of Sheffield in England, she worked in College Student Development. Seeing the enthusiasm of college students working for peace inspired her work for nonviolent social change. Traveling by ship around the world also enabled Tricia to hear the desire for lasting peace that all cultures share. She also served as the Coordinator for Pax Christi Metro DC, a region of the International Catholic Peace Movement. Organizing, activism and education all converge for Tricia in the compelling vision of Global Peace Services. She lives near the Olympic Mountains outside Seattle, Washington and works at Seattle Habitat for Humanity.

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To:

United Nations Working Group

The goal of the United Nations Working Group is to foster a collaborative relationship between GPS-USA and the United Nations and its related agencies.

We are developing a network of GPS associates at the United Nations among non-governmental organizations (NGO's) that have representatives there. We have been able to promote the idea of global peace services in statements made before various UN commissions and meetings, have consulted with UN staff about our proposal for a GPS meeting in Africa and have made GPS information available at weekly briefings for NGO representatives at the UN.

Our future plans include direct contacts with government representatives at the United Nations about the goals and objectives of GPS. We are also looking into the possibility of GPS internships at the United Nations.

This Working Group will be strengthened by members who have access to the UN through an affiliated NGO. Suggestions and inquiries are welcome. ■

Are you interested in strategizing for GPS-USA?

We need help in fundraising so that we can open an office with a salaried coordinator. We have grown beyond our all-volunteer capacity. If you can contribute your expertise, please contact us. We plan to form an advisory committee that will work mainly by phone, fax and e-mail. You can belong to this committee wherever you live.

If you are willing to serve, please contact Tricia Sullivan at 360-613-5183. ■

Africa Working Group

The goal of the Africa Working Group is to foster an understanding of the vision of global peace services among Africans and to benefit from their perspectives and experience.

We are working toward a GPS conference in the context of sub-Saharan Africa because we recognize both the extraordinary potential and need for peace service education and training there. We hope soon to identify an African partner organization to manage the conference and we intend to raise funds for this meeting.

Contact GPS-USA to learn more about the Africa Working Group, to offer your suggestions or to seek membership in this working group. ■

Xavier University Plans Peace Services Major

Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio, which has long had a Peace Studies minor, is planning to offer a Peace Service major. This will include supervised peace service besides a series of academic courses. The planning group is studying the curriculum for peace service developed for the Croatian/Swedish project (see page 1) with a view to possible adaptation to some parts of the curriculum for the Xavier University program. ■

Would you distribute brochures to other interested people?

If you are willing to give a copy of the enclosed brochure about GPS-USA to a prospective member, please contact us at 202-216-9886 and we will mail you as many copies as you need. Thanks for helping to spread the message! ■

Link-Creating Working Group

The goal of the Link-Creating Working Group is to foster communication and exchange between GPS-USA and peace service initiatives at the local level both in the United States and in countries across the world.

The Link-Creating Working Group has been working with the Conflict Resolution and Peace-Building Commission of the International Peace Research Association (IPRA) to organize a workshop on "Peace-Building Initiatives in Burundi" at the 17th General Conference of IPRA to be held in Durban, South Africa from June 23-26, 1998. We have applied for funding to enable our partners in Africa -- Burundians David Niyonzima and Modeste Karerwa Mo-Mamo - to share their experience through the workshop. David, a Quaker pastor, and Modesta, an educator, have undertaken a number of creative peace-building initiatives in Burundi and in neighboring countries to foster reconciliation among the Hutu and Tutsi communities in this region. ■

The newsletter of Global Peace Services USA is published quarterly. GPS-USA is incorporated in the District of Columbia and is tax-exempt. Contributions and comments are always welcome.

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Military Dialogue Working Group

Clearly one cannot go far in thinking about Global Peace Services without confronting questions about the military establishments of the world. Is GPS to be an alternative to the military or complementary to it? Many different possibilities need exploration. So we are searching for avenues in which real dialogue about obvious areas of mutual interest can occur: real dialogue, not just discussion and debate. And as Global Peace Services USA becomes a reality, we can report that both the dialogue and the common ground are growing - faster than we had even hoped.

General Gordon R. Sullivan, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army brought the emphasis on peace operations into the US Department of Defense, when the Berlin Wall came down. He wanted to know what new operational requirements would come to the Army. A study he ordered concluded that a body of knowledge and personnel was needed to provide continuing, timely advice and counsel to the to the Army's leadership on the new and increasingly important business of peace operations. Thus, in the summer of 1993, the United States Army Peacekeeping Institute (USAPI) was formed at the Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA.

The GPS-USA Military Dialogue Group has been greatly encouraged through dialogue with a USAPI staff member Professor Mark R. Walsh, Colonel, U.S.Army, Retired, whose speciality is humanitarian operations. Through mutual visits, workshops, and collaboration on specific projects aimed at further developing the interface between USAPI and the various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and church-based humanitarian initiatives, areas of mutual interest continue to grow.■

Religious Dialogue Working Group

The goal of the Religious Dialogue Working Group is to foster among religious bodies of Christians, Jews, Muslims and other faiths an understanding of the GPS-USA approach as a practical way to realize peace through violence-free action.

We are inspired by the following reflection from the late Henri Nouwen:

The world is waiting for new saints, ecstatic men and women who are so deeply rooted in the love of God that they are free to imagine a new international order... Most people despair that it is possible. They cling to old ways and prefer the security of their misery to the insecurity of their joy. But the few who dare to sing a new song of peace are the new St. Francis of our time, offering a glimpse of a new order that is being born out of the ruin of the old.

The Religious Dialogue Working Group believes that each of the world's religions have had saints singing this new song, central to the idea whose time has come.

We certainly found common ground on which the GPS vision is built, when two members of the Working Group attended a dialogue on "Islam and Peace" February 6-7, 1998. Islamic theologians from more than twenty Muslim nations spoke of what Islam may contribute to facilitate growing efforts at peace both within the Muslim societies and globally.■

Education and Training Working Group

The goal of the Education and Training Working Group is to enable large and diverse groups of professionally trained peacemakers to respond to conflict situations.

We plan to further this goal by pursuing the following objectives:

- * Design and implement educational curricula for use in a variety of settings (e.g.: universities, vocational schools, Elderhostels, adult continuing education.)
- * Integrate experiential training into curricula by providing guided practice or intern opportunities during course of study.
- * Create and maintain a databank of opportunities for Peace Service internships and job placements for peacemakers-in-training or trained peacemakers.
- * Promote sustained support for professional education and practice of career peacemakers.
- * Foster the commitment of young adults toward peace service careers.

Currently we are working with Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio in the development of a Peace Services major. This will be a development of their already existing Peace Studies minor. Peace Service students will spend time in actual supervised service (see page 2). To become a partner in this Working Group, please contact GPS-USA.■

Join our Annual Convocation

Watch this space for further details of our Annual Convocation to be held at Trinity College in Washington DC in late October or early November 1998, or call 202-216-9886 for more information.