

Global Peace Services USA

...an idea whose time has come

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Spreading Our Wings: Peace Power 2000 Soars Beyond the Beltway

by John Eriksson, President GPS-USA

The contributions from Peace Power 2000 "alumni" featured in our recent newsletter suggest the wide range of issues covered during our month-long program in June, as well as the significance of several experiences in personal terms. They also convey something of the great creativity and energy generated by 22 committed and thoughtful participants of diverse backgrounds and ages from all over the country.

The GPS-USA Board has been engaged in an extended process of planning our future directions, drawing from the extraordinary experience we shared in June. The process has been challenging because we have all been stimulated and inspired by the many possibilities suggested during Peace Power 2000. At the same time, we maintain a commitment to our core mission:

To contribute to the creation of professional peace service by promoting education and skills training for women and men based on a philosophy of active nonviolence.

We have developed a plan for 2001-2002 that we believe taps into the wellspring of Peace

Power 2000 and yet remains true to our mission. It is composed of the following elements:

- 1)Fostering the certification of peace service programs at three U.S. colleges and universities. This continues our emphasis on creating a professional peace service. We plan a visit to Xavier University in Cincinnati in the spring to support ongoing efforts to establish a peace service major and we have identified two other institutions with whom we want to establish a dialogue leading to a similar objective.
- 2)Nurturing three or more peace service education events or processes in different parts of the country. The key here will be to engage Peace Power 2000 alumni in planning and carrying out activities. Discussions are underway regarding several possible focal points -- all "beyond the Beltway," as we say in D.C. We welcome your suggestions!
- 3)Catalyzing a dialogue on nonviolent peace-building between one or more religious bodies and the U.S. military. This continues a long-standing commitment of GPS-USA to build such bridges.

To further contribute to an

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An Interview with Long-time Peacemaker Paul Smith

Paul Smith, is an active Quaker in his 80's and lives in Tucson, Arizona. He was a participant in the fourth week of Peace Power 2000.

Clara Doyle, GPS Board Member, interviewed him recently. We share Paul's words of wisdom with you here.

Clara: Tell us some of the highlights and experiences of your life of peacemaking.

Paul: In my 70 years' experience in listening and learning to be a peacemaker, I value the persons, books and communities that make possible my growth. Examples of these are: A.J. Muste, Bayard Rustin, Arthur E. Morgan, Kagawa, James Farmer, Muriel Lester and Krishnalal Shidharani. My training as an Eagle Boy Scout, military training in high school cadets and my 22 months with Ahimsa Farm all influenced me. Demonstrating nonviolent direct action, community building, cooperative credit unions, public speaking and mobilizing goodwill all had a part in my peacemaking efforts, as well as more than six different religious groups. We were active from Wisconsin to Massachusetts to Washington, D.C. with integration in housing and recreational facilities. We demonstrated in two pilgrimages to feed starving children in Europe due to the British blockade at that time.

Clara: What were your impressions of Peace Power 2000?

Paul: I learned about Peace Power from the American Friends Service Committee in Tucson. I learned a great amount from the resource people as well as from the other participants. Among the experiences we shared, our visit to Congressman Kucinich's office to support efforts for a U. S. Department of Peace at the cabinet level was a highlight.

Clara: How can we move forward with the vision of GPS of having professionally trained corps of peacemakers?

Paul: Global Peace Services could

collaborate with several AFSC-initiated projects including: the Help Increase the Peace Project, Children's Creative Response to Conflict and the Alternatives to Violence Project.

Clara: How would you define a peaceful world and a peaceful life?

Paul: I'd like to share my definition of a peaceful life: It's living in a variety of communities that make use of the transforming power of love and truth. And have fun doing it!*

Spreading Our Wings

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environment that will facilitate accomplishment of our core mission, we plan to continue:

- 1) Liaison with the United Nations. We are completing a registration process that will give us significant access to peace service information at the international level.
- 2) Maintaining linkages with organizations in the U.S. and abroad that have goals complementary to ours.

Determined application of talent, effort, and financial resources will be required to realize the objectives of our plan. In future communications, we will be inviting your ideas on how best to meet these essential needs.*

The newsletter of Global Peace Services USA is published quarterly. GPS-USA is incorporated in the District of Columbia and is tax-exempt. Current Board members are: Clara Doyle, John Eriksson, Mary Evelyn Jegen, Bill Price, Mindy Reiser, Tricia Sullivan and Harry Yeide. We welcome contributions and comments. To contact us:

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A Story of Our Future: Imagining Global Peace Services in Action

by Jean Martenson

After engaging in a process to image concretely a preferred future world, the author created this story for us to share.

Scene: A little restaurant in Washington.

Date: Late Spring, 2030.

The waiter was intrigued by the cluster of corner tables where a motley group of very animated people had been eating, talking and even singing for several hours. Although he had served customers from all parts of the world, this group intrigued him because it was young and old, men and women, and diverse in race, nationality and attire.

Too curious to be comfortable without knowing more about them, the waiter asked them what they appeared to be celebrating. “Small steps toward peace,” one of them replied. “Wonderfully unpredictable friendships” said one of the elders. “Tenacious resistance,” said a third. “Life!” sang out another, lifting his glass as if to make a toast.

“Can you be a little more specific?” asked the waiter. “I still haven’t a clue as to what brought you all together.” “We are all veterans,” offered a slight, bright-eyed woman who looked younger than she was and was easily seven inches shorter than the waiter. “We served together five years ago for nearly a year. When we learned that the United States was acknowledging the twenty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the Global Peace Services, we decided to have our own reunion.” “We are trained volunteers without guns who have served in

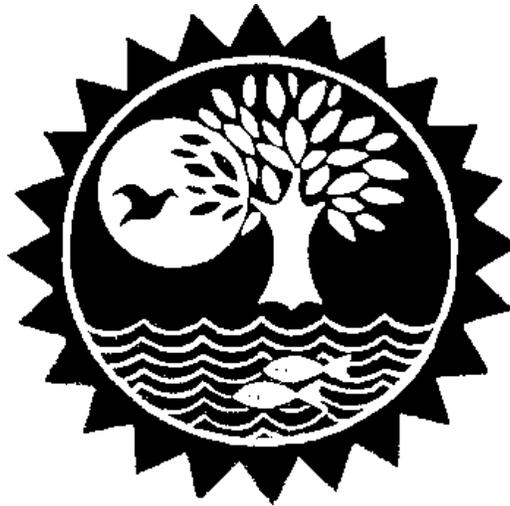
conflicted areas,” added a friendly woman who could have been the waiter’s mother. “Are you some of the people who were at Arlington National Cemetery yesterday?” (The waiter risked appearing ill informed as he had caught only a few seconds of a news story on the dedication of a memorial garden.) “Yes, we were among the thousands of people who came for the anniversary observance. We planted trees and flowering shrubs to commemorate the sacrifice of those who have died for peace by serving in international nonviolent teams.”

A man who identified himself as an Iraqi spoke up. “We shall have a similar observance in the fall. But our place of honor

spans the border between Iraq and Iran. Imagine interlocking rings of simple stone blocks. The names of those who have died in both our nations have been cut into the blocks. Around these rings, paths take you between pools of clear water and hardy plants -- gifts from neighboring nations in the region. Our neighbors are grateful for the years of peace that ordinary people in GPS have helped to build and are still working to preserve.”

The waiter was still intrigued. He was also glad that his shift was ending. If the group permitted him to join them, he would find out more about them and this “global peace service.”*

Jean Martenson participated in Peace Power 2000. She lives in Chicago and works with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.



Your Support is Appreciated

Within the next couple of weeks, you will be receiving a letter from Global Peace Services, requesting your financial support for coming endeavors. Please take some time between now and then to consider how you might support the future work of GPS. All gifts made before December 31 are tax-deductible for the year 2000.

Become Involved. Consider:

- Asking for GPS-USA brochures to distribute in your local community.
- Sponsoring a local peace service training in your area. Contact us at (202) 216-9886 for more information.
- Sending a gift of \$25, \$50 or \$75 to support the work of GPS-USA.

"The nonviolent hero often ends up dead . . . so does the soldier, by the thousands. An interesting question, however, remains: who dies in a way which is a gift to history?

Who makes it less inevitable that many others will die, in the same way, in even larger numbers, in the next generation?"

— Daniel Berrigan, S.J.

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