

# PEACE NEWS LETTER

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## The Necessity of Adjusting by Ralph Lynn

(Dr. Lynn is Professor of History at Baylor University, Waco, Texas and during the fall has been Visiting Professor at Paul Quinn College.)

Part of the tragedy of man is that he wants, in his inner being of principles and loyalties, to remain unchanged in an ever-changing world. Unquestionably, the world will change; unquestionably we human beings will change. The only question is whether the changes will come in peace or in war.

Most of us find it fairly easy to adjust to external changes like anaesthesia, air conditioning, and super-sonic travel; but we do not understand that these external changes demand internal, psychological changes if our adjustments to the changing world around us are to be orderly. We find, for example that we are unable to make the appropriate response to the fact that rapid movement of men and messages has made ancient city-county boundaries obsolete. It is rigidity of mind alone which prevents solution of these technically simple local problems. If we have such difficulty with purely local problems, it is no wonder that it is impossible for all but the professional students to see that a world which is one in economic interdependence must eventually become one in political structure. Probably the only question on this point is whether world political unity will come in orderly, peaceful fashion as the result of adjustments in the minds of men or in the violence of a series of world-wide civil wars.

Very likely we are slow in making psychological adjustments to changing circumstances because we tend to identify as sacred principles the practical responses we or our parents have made to specific problems. Perhaps these practical responses were wise and useful in their times and places; but constant repetition does not, in the view of rational men, establish customary behavior as the ultimate in wisdom nor transform temporary solutions to local problems into eternal, universally valid principles.

Most of us are troubled at this point by the commendable notion that we must not, even at the cost of ultimate sacrifice, abandon our "principles." But there is always the possibility that our "principles" are really unexamined habits or uncriticized prejudices. Perhaps the basic principle by which we should measure all social arrangements can be stated in a question: What arrangements, in this time and place and in these circumstances, best serve human dignity? By this standard, the Tories of 1776 and the Southern leaders of one hundred years ago cherished the wrong "principles"; they were too blind and too rigid to make the indicated adjustment. When the French abandoned the three-class structure of society in 1789, one of the noblemen was so true to his principles that he "met" by himself in the hall formerly assigned to the nobles, calling for old and new business and then adjourning, until the keepers of the asylum for the insane came for him. There are some principles worth dying for - or going mad for; but no thoughtful, self-critical man will sacrifice for a cause outmoded by developments and condemned by the conscience of mankind.

Clearly, mankind cannot avoid tragedy. But perhaps he can reduce its ravages somewhat without sacrificing the nobility of clinging to principles. These three suggestions could be helpful. First, we should all realize that it is impossible not to change in a changing world. Second, we should continually examine our principles so that we will not confuse selfish aims or practical solutions to passing problems with eternal principles. Third, we should school ourselves to listen respectfully to our fellows, realizing that the areas in which any man is competent to judge are small indeed.

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-- Waco Tribune-Herald, Jan. 21, 1962

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BLAST - OFF  
AND  
CAMP - OUT

Since the new goal of education's  
A world of scientific nations,  
And tots from nursery school through college  
Must soak in heady nuclear knowledge,  
A forward-looking parent ought  
To see that junior's also taught  
At least the rudimentary tricks  
Of making fire with just two sticks.

-- Virginia Brasier  
Saturday Review of Literature  
January 13, 1962

**SHELTERS** An editorial in the Christian Science Monitor (1/24/62) summarizes important  
**AND** questions concerning the shelter problem "on which Washington is not being  
**FEAR** candid with the American people...."

"First, fallout shelters will not protect against blast and firestorm in a target area. A very large segment of the American people live in target areas..." (It appears from recent remarks of a high military officer in Waco that more and more people will live in target areas as new sites are developed for missiles. Ed.)

"Second, the official approach to guarding civilians is a statistical one. What the individual wants to know is what steps will assure protection for himself and his family. But if the government were frank, it would be forced to reply that it cannot offer such an assurance. A percentage will survive but individual reassurance is not practical.

"Finally, much too little has been said about the problems of emerging from shelters. This is not an affair of two weeks in the shelter and then sound the all clear. There might be a month thereafter of slowly increasing trips outside. And the government hesitates to specify what sort of a world would await outside and what would need to be done to continue survival.

"There has been intense controversy behind the scenes in Washington as to whether the public can bear honest information...." (Emphasis supplied. Ed.)

**NEW YORK** On November 9th, 1961, the Assembly of the State of New York in special session  
**FRAUD?** adopted a bill which appropriated \$100 million on a matching fund basis for the construction of community fallout shelters and which also authorized the state Civil Defense Commission to recommend materials "including the names of specific trade products and their manufacturers."

Assemblyman Mark Lane (10th Assembly District, Manhattan, New York City) reports (Liberation, Jan., 1962) that in December, 1960, some eleven months earlier, the contents of the bill had been articulated by Benjamin Tessler, President of Lancer Industries, Inc. Lancer Industries, through a subsidiary, is either engaged in or wants to engage in the manufacture and sale of fallout shelters. One of its directors who also has acted as its attorney is the Speaker of the Assembly, Joseph Carlino. Contrary to earlier protestations, Carlino was forced to admit that he received a total of \$5,300 from the concern.

The bill, says Lane, was first seen by most legislators on the day it was passed. Most Assemblymen "didn't have time to read the fifty-page bill, much less evaluate its implications before voting on it." Lane's request for a delay to permit reading before voting was denied. Further, "no committee studied the bill... It was reported out by the chairman of the Rules Committee, who happens to be Speaker Carlino." Could it be, asks Lane, that the bill's sponsors recognized that it "is a fraud and cannot stand the test of logical debate and discussion"? Lane suggests that "this bill has turned out to be not only a political deception aimed at preparing the people for an unnecessary and suicidal war but also a fraud, motivated in part, by desire for personal profit."

Assemblyman Lane has introduced a bill intended to repeal the fallout shelter bill, and on February 12th he intends to introduce a motion seeking discharge of that bill from committee. It is anticipated that numerous persons will be talking with their legislators on that date regarding the fallout shelter bill and its repeal.

**NEW** Nuclear physicist Leo Szilard has recently made a number of addresses around the  
**PEACE** country which he hopes will lay the groundwork for a vigorous and effective na-  
**FORCE?** tional lobby for peace.

In a Los Angeles lecture, Dr. Szilard asserted that "war seems to be inevitable unless it is possible somehow to alter the pattern of behavior which America and Russia are exhibiting at present.

"You, as Americans, are not in a position to influence the Russian Government; it follows that you would have to bring about a change in the attitude of the American Govern-

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"You, as Americans, are not in a position to influence the Russian Government; it follows that you would have to bring about a change in the attitude of the American Government which, in turn, may bring about a similar change in the attitude of the Russian government."

"It is conceivable that if a dedicated minority were to take effective political action, they could bring about the change in attitude that is needed. But such a minority can take effective action only if it is possible to formulate a set of political objectives on which it can unite."

-- Christian Science Monitor, Jan. 24, 1962

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