

PEACE NEWS LETTER

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IN AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE NORMAN J. WHITNEY 1891 - 1967

It is with sadness that we record the passing from this life of Norman J. Whitney on December 1st. We rejoice that for him, release came quietly and painlessly.

Norman came to Syracuse as a member of the English Department of the University. His teaching career spanned 43 years, 37 of which were spent at Syracuse. But for Norman, his teaching was the base from which he reached out into the community, the nation, and the world, sharing his deep faith and his wise reflections in efforts to breathe unity and love into human affairs.

He, together with Miss M. Lesly West and the Rev. Luther Wesley Smith, founded the Syracuse Peace Council in 1936. Until he left Syracuse in 1957, Norman was intimately associated with all of its varied activities and approaches. Indeed, in these last ten years, he watched over it from a distance.

A Quaker "by Convincement" Norman was immersed in the life and workings of the Religious Society of Friends and of the American Friends Service Committee. Indeed, it was to these that he devoted himself since his departure from Syracuse. The fledgling Friends World Institute also received a measure of his concern and devotion. For all of these he traveled the lengths and breadth of the United States and circled the globe, often accompanied by his sister, Miss Mildred C. Whitney.

Norman came into the lives of people in a variety of ways— as a classroom teacher, as a tireless visitor to Conscientious Objectors in wartime camps, as the Dean of innumerable World Affairs institutes, as a counselor, as the author of the monthly Spectator Papers, and for many years, as the editor of this modest publication.

We can offer no more fitting a memorial than to give of ourselves, as did Norman, to the cause of Peace on this Earth.

Immediate and tangible expressions of esteem may be in the form of Memorial Gifts to the Syracuse Peace Council.

MYTHS AND REALITIES Dr. George McT. Kahin, Professor of Government at Cornell, and Director of it's Southeast Asia Program, addressed a Conference on Vietnam sponsored by the Episcopal Diocese of Central New York, Dec. 1-3, 1967. Professor Kahin holds that U.S. policy towards Vietnam is based upon myths. The more deeply the U.S. has become mired down, the more the administration has obscured reality to make the war acceptable to the American electorate, but with diminishing success.

MYTH 1: That one country is, in fact, two. The Geneva agreements of 1954 stipulated that Vietnam is one country, and elections in 1956 were to unify a temporarily divided country. However, the U.S. worked hard to create a separate, non-Communist, independent South, thus making the 17th parallel a national boundary contrary to the Geneva agreements.

MYTH 2: That a Civil War is aggression. This is the cornerstone myth of the Johnson administration's position. The U.S. contends it is in the South to repel outside aggression, but the country is one. What has happened is that one party in the Civil War in the South has drawn support from its friends in other parts of Vietnam.

Under the Geneva agreements, the United States is limited to 68,000 military personnel in the South. However, by mid 1962 the United States had 10,000 men there. At that time, the total number of Viet Cong below the 17th parallel was 19,000. In 1965, Senator Mansfield says there were an estimated 400 North Vietnamese among V.C. forces numbering 140,000 men. Today there are an estimated 50,000 North Vietnamese among 200-240,000 V.C. There are as many South Koreans as North Vietnamese in the South, and ten times as many Americans as North Vietnamese.

If we want peace, Hanoi cannot be treated as an aggressor in what it regards as its own country. Moreover, both Hanoi and the National Liberation Front do not trust the U.S. as a consequence of 20 years of U.S. policy.

MYTH 3: That a narrowly based Saigon aristocracy has widespread popular support. Professor Kahin spent a major portion of his address reviewing the current situation in the South. Contrary to optimistic reports from American officials, his own observations are that, despite "an enduring American military shield," Saigon, by confession of some of its own officials, is incapable, "in less than a generation," "of building up a political force with any chance of competing effectively with the N.L.F." A general in the junta admitted that "even if we defeat them militarily, they can come to power because of their greater political strength."

Professor Kahin says that the military situation has deteriorated for the U.S. and Saigon forces during the past several months while the strength of the VC has grown. "Actually only a very small part of rural South Vietnam is administered by Saigon and a much larger area and considerably greater rural population is under NLF administration. In addition, there are the extensive "contested areas."

The type of warfare being waged against the VC alienates the peasantry from Saigon. "Search and destroy missions destroy the social fabric of the country. Harassment and interdiction shelling and reprisal bombings of villages suspected of harboring VC drive people away from adherence to Saigon.

The United States, through its superior firepower, generates most of the refugees. They do not abandon their homes to escape the VC, but to escape U.S. firepower. When Westmoreland and Baner assert that the population under Saigon control is increasing, their statements reflect the increased number of refugees in Saigon controlled areas - people not necessarily loyal to Saigon. About 25% of the rural population are refugees. The problem is created by U.S. military tactics. Then the U.S. expects Saigon to look after the refugees, which it does not.

MYTH 4: That an anti-Chinese Hanoi regime is a puppet of China. There is a long history of Vietnamese animosity towards China. Nationalism is an important element in the Communist world. There are varieties of Communism, and even the Communists in South Vietnam do not entirely agree with Hanoi. Indeed, the NLF (made up of both Communists and non-Communists) in light of the long war, does not want to see immediate reunification with the North once the war is over because the South will need a period for reconstruction and stabilization.

Professor Kahin asserted that the U.S. bargaining position continues to deteriorate. The U.S. can increase its firepower without increasing its political strength. U.S. responsibility to the Vietnamese people and to U.S. troops is to recognize the political realities in South Vietnam and adjust to them.

The bombing of North Vietnam must cease as a prerequisite to the possibility of negotiations. The U.S. can't expect Hanoi to deal over the head of the NLF, our major adversary. Thus the U.S. must deal with the NLF in its own right, and it can not expect to dictate a settlement if it wants an enduring solution.

Further elaboration of Professor Kahin's findings based on his studies and recently completed extended tour of Southeast Asia may be found in his article, "The NLF's Terms for Peace," New Republic, Oct 14, 1968.

INTERFAITH Leaders of the New York Yearly Meeting, Society of Friends,
 PILGRIMAGE the University Christian Movement, Catholic-Peace Fellowship
 FOR VIETNAM Jewish Peace Fellowship, Quaker Action Group, and other
 WAR RELIEF groups are planning a public rally and vigil in Buffalo,
 New York, followed by a procession across the Peace Bridge
 to deliver contributions and parcels of relief to the Canadian Friends
 Service Committee for its Vietnam Aid shipments to the Red Cross of
 North Vietnam, South Vietnam, and National Liberation Front.

On Saturday, December 23, local religious groups are asked to under-
 take public walks or otherwise make visible their concern for sending
 relief parcels for our brothers who suffer in all parts of Vietnam,
 arranging for their delivery to Buffalo.

On Wednesday, December 27, groups from distant cities will leave by
 car for Buffalo, where local hospitality will be arranged. Friday,
 December 29, beginning at midnight, a vigil will be held at the Peace
 Bridge. At 10 a.m., a briefing will be conducted. At 2 p.m. the group
 will walk over the Peace Bridge. If it overcomes obstacles imposed by
 American and Canadian authorities, the group will go to Toronto for a
 public rally and presentation of the gifts.

Readers are urged to contact Annette Guistond, Executive Secretary
 of the Peace Council, for latest information about the Pilgrimage.

BIRTHDAY The 32nd Birthday Party of the Syracuse Peace Council will
 PARTY be held on Tuesday, January 30, at First Presbyterian Parish
 House on West Genesee Street. Speaker of the evening will
 be Ross Flanagan, who is Director of the Quaker Project on
 Community Conflict, which is an activity of N.Y. yearly meet-
 ing of the Religious Society of Friends. May we suggest that you
 reserve the date now, and participate in this witness to a steady, long
 term effort to overcome indifference to human values?

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