

# Unitarian Universalism and the Movement for World Peace

Our movement's history is rife with evidence of a strong Unitarian Universalist commitment to peace and opposition to war. At our organized beginnings, the 15th Century Polish Brethren, forebears of Unitarianism in Europe, Brethren noblemen wore wooden swords publicly in place of real weapons as an indication of their commitment to Jesus' teachings of non violence. Our earliest Universalist traditions here in the States went on record against war at one of its earliest conventions in Philadelphia in 1790, sharing as well common roots with the historic peace churches in Pennsylvania.

Dr. George deBenneville, our original source of Universalism in America, in the Pennsylvania colony, was a strong evangelical Anabaptist. He was nearly put to death for his beliefs in Europe, before coming to America, as indeed did happen to the proto-unitarian, anabaptist physician, Michael Servetus, two centuries before deBenneville. After coming to Pennsylvania, deBenneville associated with the Mennonites, the Ephrata Baptist community, the Schwenckfelders, and Rosicrucians, who were all part of the large contingent of German Brotherhood groups that emigrated to Pennsylvania in the 18th Century. Like deBenneville they shared a belief in universal salvation and an opposition to war and killing, in keeping with their strong pietistic christian tradition.

(for deBenneville's early associations in the Colonies see *The Life and Times of George deBenneville (1703-1793)*, Albert R. Bell, UCA, Boston, 1953 and "deBenneville and the Radicals, David Johnson, *The Journal of the Universalist Historical Society Vol VIII, 1969-70*, Boston ,p.25)

George deBenneville also joined with the developing Universalist movement in Philadelphia that included Elhanan Winchester, a Universalist who came over from the Baptist tradition, and the several Universalist physicians of the newly organized Medical School at the University of Pennsylvania. The most important of these physicians was Dr. Benjamin Rush, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, a friend of the Unitarians, Priestley, Jefferson, the deist Franklin and other founders of our nation. Rush is considered to be the first psychiatrist in the U.S.

At an early gathering of Universalists from around the new nation, held in 1790 in Philadelphia, Rush drafted a Statement of Principles that was a landmark for the emergent new movement. The Universalists also adopted a statement both against slavery and warfare which has influenced us down to our own time::

"Although defensive wars are lawful, there is a time coming when universal love of the gospel will put an end to all wars. Hence members should cultivate brotherly love, considering all men as brothers."

"Slavery is inconsistent with the Savior's gospel of universal love".

They also adopted a Rule of Faith at the same 1790 Convention that said "Each church reserves for itself full and exclusive power to judge matters of faith and practice among its members." However this freedom clause by no means abrogated their strong

statement of principle against slavery and war in terms of how they had come to understand the historic gospels.

These prescriptions against slavery and war then were fundamental principles of Universalism from its beginnings. Yet they were not always honored especially during the jingoistic heat of the 1st World War when the Universalist Church of America endorsed the war effort in Europe, just as did the Unitarian Conference at that time. This led the great social activist and non violence advocate, John Haynes Holmes to lead his congregation, now the Community Church of New York, out of the denomination for more than a decade. The Universalist Clarence Skinner, professor at Tufts, and also a non violent activist, joined with him at the time to help start the Community Church movement..

The right of our members to conscientious objection to war also has been supported by our Unitarian and Universalist movements, although not without a struggle as we shall see.

A less well- known part of our history is the pioneering leadership for peace by the universally recognized “Father of American Unitarianism”, Dr. William Ellery Channing. Channing was a founder of the Peace Society of Massachusetts, the first peace society in America. He invited Noah Worcester to organize the first gathering of this group in 1815, in the parsonage of the Church of Christ in Federal Street, Boston. This Peace Society of Massachusetts was the progenitor of other such groups that continued throughout our U.S. history that ultimately helped lead to the founding of the United Nations in 1945.

On May 16th, 1816, Channing gave a thoroughly bold and original “Sermon on War” before the Convention of Congregational Ministers of Massachusetts. It is must-reading today for it challenges us to a deeper understanding of the consequences of war. A few quotes are of moment--first, his description of an assault on a city that could be Fallujah:

Day and night, the weapons of death and conflagration fly around them. (Men), women, children, the old, the infirm see the approaches of the foe, the trembling bulwark and the fainting strength of their defenders. They are worn with famine, and on famine presses pestilence. At length the assault is made, every barrier is broken down, and a lawless soldiery, exasperated by resistance, and burning with lust and cruelty, are scattered through the streets. The domestic(k) retreat and even the house of God , is no longer a sanctuary. Venerable age is no protection. Female purity is no defense. In presence of the dying husband, and the murdered child, the wife is spared, not from mercy, but to gratify the basest passion. These are heart-rending scenes but history abounds with them; and what better fruits can you expect from war?

Channing most penetrating insight about the ravages of war is left for his discussion of the effects upon the warring nation---effects it would be well for the United States to contemplate:

The influence of war on the community at large, on its prosperity, its morals, and its political institutions, though less striking than on the soldiery, is yet most baleful.—

How often is a community impoverished to sustain a war in which it has no interest. Public(k) burdens are aggravated, while the means of sustaining them are reduced. Internal improvements are neglected. The revenue of the state is exhausted in military establishments, or flows through secret channels into the coffers of corrupt men, whom war exalts to power and office. . .

But the influence of war on the morals of society is still more fatal. The suspension of industry and the pressure of want multiply vice.. Criminal modes of subsistence are the resource of the suffering. Public(k) and private credit are shaken. Distrust and fear take place of mutual confidence. Commerce becomes a system of stratagems and collusion; and the principles of justice receive a shock which many years of peace are not able to repair.

This wise counsel of a true teacher of Spirit galvanized a whole generation of Unitarian Universalist Transcendentalists who saw Channing as their “Mentor” and “Bishop.” These titles were given to him by America’s important religious philosopher, the catalytic revolutionary of American Transcendentalism, Ralph Waldo Emerson. This romantic idealist movement, as it flourished in America, produced numerous reform movements that incorporated the ideals of community living as in the early Christian movement..(Acts 2) Among the many communitarian groups founded by Unitarian Universalists were the Ripleys’ Brook Farm, Adin Ballou’s Hopedale, Bronson Alcott’s Fruitlands, Abner Kneeland’s Salubria, and Frances Wright and Robert Owen’s New Harmony that Orestes Brownson helped influence. All incorporated the concept of a loving community that advocated doing away with competitive economic and personal striving that they believed led to war..

From this Transcendentalist upsurge came two classics of the non violence movement. The first was the earliest complete treatise on non violence in the world written by the Universalist Unitarian minister, Adin Ballou 1846, *Christian Non-Resistance in all its Important Bearings, Illustrated and Defended*. It was based upon an earlier 1839 pamphlet printed by the New England Non-Resistance Society, founded by Ballou along with William Lloyd Garrison, a leading abolitionist. This work later caught the attention of the great Russian novelist, Leo Tolstoy, who carried on a correspondence with this favorite American writer of his. (Russell Miller, *The Larger Hope*, p.512, Boston, 1979)

The second was the influential essay by Emerson’s protege, Henry David Thoreau, “On Civil Disobedience,” that first appeared in Elizabeth Palmer Peabody’s journal, *Aesthetic Papers* in 1848 in Boston. This essay is now a great classic that has influenced Gandhi, King and many others, and was the study text for the Berrigan brothers, Plowshares Group, before they carried out their act of civil disobedience action against the Trident missile factory in King of Prussia , Pennsylvania in the late 80s.

Emerson came and asked Thoreau what he was doing in jail, where he had been put away for refusing to pay his poll tax, that Thoreau believed supported the Mexican War; Thoreau replied, “What are you doing out there, Ralph?.”

Most of the New England Transcendentalists and many Northerners, including the freshman congressman from Illinois, Abraham Lincoln, opposed the Mexican War because of its clear aggressive potential that could extend U.S. slavery into new states into what would have been former Mexican territory. The Massachusetts Universalist Convention voted an anti-war resolution in 1848 condemning the Mexican War. Hosea Ballou II, leading historian of Universalism and Tufts professor, called the war “a very black page in our

history.” He asked Americans to take a long look at U.S. leaders and “their world-renowned self-glorification,”—and that our country had become as much the aggressor as the very European nations we complain about. (Miller, *Ibid*, p.511)

The reverends Edwin Chapin, minister of the Church of the Divine Paternity of New York City; Charles Spear, the great prison reformer and anti-war devotee and Alonzo Miner, Minister of the Columbus St. Universalist Church of Boston, later President of Tufts College; attended as speakers, the World Peace Conferences in Frankfort and London in the early 1850s.

The on-coming struggle against slavery, the “irrepressible conflict,” as Unitarian Massachusetts Senator, Charles Sumner aptly prophesied, changed all that. By 1858-9 Waldo Emerson, and the Rev. Thomas Higginson, two of “the Secret Seven,” had given financial support for John Brown’s occupation of the Harper’s Ferry Armory for the purpose of helping arm the slaves to free themselves. Julia Ward Howe in 1861 was to write the lyrics to the “Battle Hymn of the Republic,” at the suggestion of Higginson to the popular folk song about “John Brown’s body lies amoulding in the grave.” Thoreau gave a passionate salute to “the great Transcendentalist,” John Brown, after Brown’s capture, during his summary trial. He made this speech even before the Civil War had broken out, to a packed public meeting of his townspeople in Concord, Mass. Emerson and he aided some of Brown’s men who had fled Harper’s Ferry to escape over the border to Canada. (oral interview with Truman Nelson, scholar of Transcendentalism). These changed attitudes illustrate the depth of feeling against the abuses of slavery and the swing in public opinion about the use of physical force. Most had come to believe that even physical violence is permissible if used in pursuit of a fervent righteousness cause. The slavery issue, as for most US citizens, overwhelmed Unitarian Universalists who had been committed to peace, as the Civil War began to explode.

Walt Whitman went to nurse the wounded in D.C. Many of the UU women such as Clara Barton, Mary Livermore, Dorothea Dix, and Julia Ward Howe helped care for the war Injured as well

The staunchest hold out in his opposition to war was Adin Ballou, who before the war, along with William Lloyd Garrison, had helped form the Non-Resister’s Alliance as a radical breakaway from the Peace Society. After the violent takeover of Harper’s Ferry, the hanging of John Brown and others of his band, the subsequent secession of Southern states and the incendiary outbreak of war at Ft. Sumter, very few of the abolitionists, other than Ballou, maintained their principled non violent position. Even William Lloyd Garrison slid toward approving the necessity for the Union to respond to the attack upon the Union by defending itself. Garrison insisted that Providence had visited this struggle upon the States as a way of eliminating the evils of slavery.

What have we to rejoice over? Why, I say the war! “What! this fratricidal war? What! this civil war? What, this treasonable dismemberment of the Union? “Yes, thank God for it all! For it indicates the waning power of slavery and the irresistible growth of freedom, and that the day of Northern submission is past...this is fundamentally a struggle between all the elements of freedom on the one hand, and all the elements of despotism on the other, with whatever of alloy...

I repeat, the war furnishes ground for high encouragement. “Why,” some may exclaim, “we thought you were a peace man!” Yes, verily, I am, and none the less so because of these declarations. Would the cause of peace be the gainer by the substitution of the power of the rebel traitors over the nation for the supremacy of

the democratic idea? Would the cause of peace be promoted by the North basely yielding up rights and allowing her free institutions to be overthrown? Certainly not. Then, as a peace man, I rejoice that the issue is at last made up, and that the struggle is going on, because I see in it the sign of ultimate redemption.”

-William Lloyd Garrison , 1862,

from W.P.Garrison & F.J. Garrison, *Life*, iv, pp.40f

Though Garrison was a Baptist, he associated with Unitarians and Universalists in the abolition and peace movements, and his changed perspective of support for war as visited upon the union in this civil war, spoke for many Unitarian Universalists at that time. One who deferred was Adin Ballou, a Unitarian Universalist minister and a close ally of Garrison when the New England Non-Resistance Society was started out of the American Peace Society .in 1838. Adin Ballou, author of the first treatise ever to be written on Non-Resistance in 1846, was to write in his later autobiography:

“...it was hard for me to understand how professing anti-war Abolitionists of long standing should so forget or ignore their former protestations against the use of violent means for carrying forward their work and freeing the bondsmen, as to be swept into the same foaming vortex of blood and death. As for me, I remained unmoved, except for sorrow for such an end by evil means, and pity for the sufferer who had rashly plunged into a lion’s den. Adin Ballou, **Autobiography**, pp416ff.

It was for a later generation of Unitarian Universalists to catch Adin Ballou’s devoted commitment to peace through peaceful means. One of these staunch advocates for peace, who rose to leadership in our movement, was the extraordinary Jenkin Lloyd Jones. He was elected Missionary Secretary of the Western Unitarian Conference in 1875 and became the indefatigable Unitarian missionary to the whole of the Western U.S. Jones came from a long line of Welsh Arminian ministers. His parents emigrated to the US when he was a child and settled in frontier Wisconsin in the Wyoming Valley. Here his descendent, the late, great architect, Frank Lloyd Wright was to build Taliesin in the 20th Century. Jones since boyhood wanted to be a Unitarian minister. He enlisted however in a Wisconsin artillery battery when the Civil War erupted. to fight against slavery and preserve the Union. He also enlisted to be a substitute for his older, married brother, thus keeping him from having to serve in the war. When the war ended, Jenkin Lloyd Jones concluded, “it was such a wrong way of doing the right thing.’ After a year of helping his father on the farm and teaching for a winter school term in 1866 he enrolled at the Theological School in Meadville, Pennsylvania, thus embarking upon a long and influential Unitarian ministry. He was to be resolutely opposed to all war his whole career. Charles Lyttle, *Freedom Moves West*, Beacon Press, 1952, pp.117-19, 224, 26)

By now, the grim Civil War behind them, the outstanding Julia Ward Howe began to organize a world effort for peace by advocating for A Mother’s Day. In 1870, in a manifesto for peace, written for the strong, gathering women’s movement, she proclaimed the establishment of a Mother’s Day, specifically for the ending of the killing of husbands and sons in war:

Arise all women, who have hearts, whether your baptism be that of water or of fears!. Say firmly: “We will not have great questions decided by irrelevant agencies. Our husbands shall not come to us reeking with carnage, for caresses and applause.

Our sons shall not be taken from us to unlearn all that we have been able to teach them of charity, mercy and patience. We women of our country will be too tender of those of another country to allow our sons to be trained to injure them.. From the bosom of the devastated earth a voice goes up with our own. It says ‘Disarm, Disarm!’”

--Julia Ward Howe, Mother’s Day Proclamation  
quoted in *Singing the Living Tradition*, Boston, 1993

Jenkin Lloyd Jones was fervent in his social advocacy, missionary zeal, and his embodiment of a broad inclusive, universal religious perspective. He was tireless in his efforts to spread a liberal message throughout the newly settled West and in his outreach to the whole world. As Secretary of the Western Conference, he helped establish churches from Chicago to California and encouraged many women to enter the ministry. He was especially helpful to the Iowa Sisterhood of about 20 women, who mutually supported one another in a most dynamic cooperative ministry that established and solidified congregations across the mid-west and later in Florida and California as well. They shared his progressive vision of the church as a community of peacemakers who outreached to shape a world community of justice and peace. Their work extended to the poor and the disadvantaged for they saw the church as active in the uplift of humanity and as the teacher of religiously humane values. They were especially active in helping to bring the influential World’s Columbian Exposition, with its pioneering Parliament of World Religions, into being in Chicago in 1893. They marked the 500th anniversary of Columbus’ landing in the Americas as an occasion for bringing together religious liberals from across the country and from the far reaches of the world. Jenkin Lloyd Jones and other Unitarian Universalist leaders, particularly leading women of the Chicago area, such as the reverends Augusta Chapin, Florence Kollock and Olympia Brown, played a significant role in its organization and program.

Jenkin Lloyd Jones moreover gave his full energy for over a year to help bring religious leaders of all world faiths to this unprecedented gathering. This was to be the first time that such a high-level meeting of the nation’s and world’s religious leaders had come together: Shinto, Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Christians of all denominations, Jewish, Confucian, Unitarian Universalist and Ethical Culture and others. . Jones worked to encourage Unitarian Universalists from all parts of our country and Europe to attend.. The very experience of shaping this inclusive world meeting of religious leaders was indeed a tangible step toward world peace, especially when conflict and wars over religious differences have been too common throughout human history. Unitarian Universalists played a very significant role in its happening.

In addition to Jenkin Lloyd Jones’ on-going daily leadership, The Reverend A.J. Canfield of St. Paul’s Universalist Church sat on the original planning committee, the Reverend Augusta Chapin, minister at Iowa City and lecturer at the University of Chicago, chaired the Women’s Committee of the Department of Religion and was instrumental in getting Julia Ward Howe to speak. The Reverend Florence Kollock, organizer of Universalist churches in Englewood, a suburb of Chicago, and in Pasadena, California gave a talk on “Women in the Pulpit.” Olympia Brown, the first woman ordained by any U.S. denomination gave a paper on “Crime, Capital Punishment, and Temperance” Later toward the end of her long life, after a lifetime of work for women’s liberation, Olympia Brown became devoted to work for peace in the Women’s International League for Peace and

Freedom. Each denomination also held their separate Congress during the Parliament gathering. For five days during the conference, Universalist leaders from across the country give “presentations (that) comprise(d) the most complete inventory, both theologically and organizationally since the centennial of 1870.”

(Russell Miller, *The Larger Hope*, vol.II, pp.119-125)

### Into a Century of World Wars and Empire

After the explosion on the battleship Maine in Havana harbor in 1898, the Hearst-Hanna-Rockefeller interests hawked the Spanish-American War to the American public to attack Spain's colonies in Cuba, the Philippines, Puerto Rico and elsewhere. Jenkin Lloyd Jones used his editorial position at *Unity* magazine to “denounce the aggression” and to urge peace, as did most of his Unitarian Universalist western colleagues. His opposition to war continued toward the Boer and Russo-Japanese Wars, as well as the preparations by Woodrow Wilson in 1914 as the First World War was beginning in Europe. “Where are the newspapers that will anticipate the ghastliness of the battlefields, the gruesomeness of the hospitals...Let artist, orator, teacher, lawyer and above all ministers of religion speak out!” he exclaimed.

Charles Lyttle, *Freedom Moves West*. Boston, 1952, pp116-7

The Republican Party in their platform of 1900 included this prophetic statement: We assert no nation can long endure half republic and half empire and we warn the American people that imperialism abroad will lead quickly and inevitably to despotism at home. We are not willing to surrender our civilization to convert the Republic into an empire.

We believe in extending influence among nations, but believe influence should be extended not by force and violence but by.. a high and honorable example.

Wars have a way of unhinging religious principles. The pressure comes from both the inward feeling of loyal patriotism to support ones country and fellow countrymen under fire, as well as the outward pressures of going along with ones compatriots caught up in the fervor of support for ones fellow citizens in battle. We have seen how the civil war in the States caught up even as staunch a nonviolent resister as William Lloyd Garrison into shading his non violent commitment. .

As the First World War came upon Europe, pressures in the US grew to join in and participate. The clamor to join the fray on the side of the British and French built up within the States. Yet Jenkin Lloyd Jones as editor of the magazine, *Unity*, published by the Western Conference of Unitarians, wrote strong editorials against going to war. “I am opposing war as the survival of the beast that is ever followed by a trail of woe, degradation, demoralization.” The way to world peace lies through the hearts and minds of the people.” The authorities in Washington D.C .found such opinions subversive and suspended the mailing privilege for Jones' *Unity* magazine for almost two months in the summer of 1918. It was finally allowed to be sent through the mails, after much protest. When Jones received his copy in the mail , worn out by the struggle, he “fell into a deep slumber, and died in his sleep.” (Lyttle, *Idem*, pp.226-8)

Already by the time of Jones' passing, the Universalists with the leadership of the gifted Clarence Skinner, minister and professor of Applied Christianity at Crane Theological School at Tufts University, had adopted a far-reaching "Declaration of Social Principles" in 1917 at its General Convention in Worcester, Mass. This Declaration embodied the work that had been done over the past century by many notables, such as the Spear brothers, Edwin Chapin and Frank Holmes, prominent Universalist ministers in New York City, famous for their social work with the poor. Also Dorothea Dix, Mary and Daniel Livermore, Susan B. Anthony, Joseph Tuckerman, Jenkin Lloyd Jones, all leaders in the Universalist and Unitarian movements (as well as countless others not so well-known). This historic mantle of social responsibility in the movement was picked up and elaborated by Skinner in his ministries in New York City, Mt. Vernon, N.Y. and Lowell, Mass. As an activist and committed non-violent activist, he had involved himself in settlement house work and had organized a New York City clergy group called Church Peace Union. In 1910, Skinner was appointed Secretary of a newly created Commission on Social Service for the General Convention of Universalists. He spoke out that year (1910) for "an almighty crusade by the Christian Church against war," and recommended a "Peace Day" to be observed in all churches.

As minister in Lowell, Skinner undertook work with a scholarly volunteer, layman Levi Powers, of the adjoining city of Haverhill, Mass. to reinvigorate the social gospel movement within an already socially-concerned Universalism. Both of them wrote articles for the main Universalist magazine, the *Leader* and saw to it that Walter Rauschenbusch, the leading proponent of the social gospel and Jane Addams of Hull House, associated with Jones and the Unitarian movement in Chicago, were invited as main speakers to the 1913 General Convention held in Chicago. The theme of Rauschenbusch's talk, "The Christianizing of the Social Order" became the chosen theme for the 1915 General Convention held in Pasadena. Skinner by this time, as Secretary of the national Commission on Social Service had expanded his magazine articles into his first major work, *The Social Implications of Universalism*. In this short book, Skinner begins to approach a truly 20th Century Universalism, yet a perspective still encased in a liberal Christian framework, rooted in an authentic reading of Jesus' teachings:

"The liberal faith stresses the achievement of salvation through the employment of the active and socially effective virtues of love, cooperation and brotherhood taught by Jesus and emphasized by Him as the true redemptive forces."

As with Theodore Parker who avowed that "the arc of the universe is long, yet it bends toward justice," Skinner exclaims:

The newer, larger life is dawning...the new eyes see the new heaven and the new earth. The religion of the universals—Universalism—is the religion of that new life, is the revelation of that new vision. In it the whole of humanity can be gathered as a unit, each individual with his or her custom, creed and personality guaranteed freedom and democratic respect, but each individual enlarged and expanded so as to meet all other individuals on the common ground of mutual needs and universal interests.

From **The Social Implications of Universalism**  
In *Journal of the Universalist Historical Society*, Vol V, 1964-5, pp.116-7

This became translated into simple strong statements in the "Declaration of the National Social Commission's Statement adopted by the 1917 National Conference as  
We declare for the democratization of industry and of land, and for the establishment of cooperation. (and)

War is brutalizing, wasteful and ineffective. We therefore pledge ourselves to work for the organization and federation of the world, that peace may be secured at the earliest possible date consistent with justice for all.

Quoted in Emerson Lalone, **And Thy Neighbor As Thyself, Boston**, 1939, p111-2

The world war in Europe built up and bogged down in a huge slaughter of young the children of Belgium, suffering from the war. Congregations such as the Scituate, Mass. Church passed resolutions sent along to President Wilson appealing “for an immediate cessation of hostilities.” John Haynes Holmes, the leading Unitarian minister in New York Church of the Messiah gave a 9 part series on “Force vs. Non Resistance.”

Finally Wilson led the U.S. into the war across the ocean to join in this futile fray between European nations competing for Empire. Support for the war effort galvanized within the Unitarian Universalist movements as elsewhere, by the U.S. entrance into the war. A War Work Council was set up by the Unitarian Association’s Directors to coordinate conservation at home and religious work in the mobilization camps. The absurd killing of the war and its jingoist propaganda all served to undermine the exuberant vision of Skinner and others that had grown out of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century expansion of knowledge and its confidence in progress.

Clarence Skinner was only one of three Universalist ministers to declare themselves “pacifists” in this upsurge of support for the war effort. Skinner came under great pressure at Tufts University where he had come as a professor at Crane Theological School in 1914. Yet the Dean, Lee McColester, supported him as a Boston newspaper singled out him, Jane Addams, and John Haynes Holmes as pacifists and he found himself under attack. He weathered this difficulty and the post-war celebration of martial strength. In 1919 the war over, when a new pietism was dulling the cutting edge of social gospel, he and others laid the ground work, along with Rev. John Haynes Holmes of New York, for the progressive Community Church movement..

As followers of the Master (Jesus) believe in the efficiency of love. And then when we have established justice, we may have Peace. And where Peace is, there religion may be.”

-Clarence Skinner, “Militarism or Christianity”, Universalist Leader, 4/24/1911)

Quoted in “Clarence Skinner, The Dark Years”, Charles Gaines,

Annual Journal of the Universalist Historical Society, Volume III, 1962

The reaction at the Montreal General Conference of Unitarians in September 1917, after the US had been led by Wilson into this European War, was extremely tense and troubled. Former President William Howard Taft, the moderator of the Conference, opened the session with a flourishing plea for the Unitarians to fully support the war winning it in the interest of the peace of the world,” he declaimed.. John Haynes Holmes, the leading New York City minister, a close friend and ally of both Jenkin Lloyd Jones and Clarence Skinner, reported for the War Work Council with a “stunning eloquence:”

This war has marshaled whole populations in the work of death... Millions are dead on the battlefield or in the hospital, more millions are wounded, maimed, blinded or diseased, other millions including unnumbered women and children are...the nameless victims of famine, pestilence, and butchery. And still the fight goes on.. : Holmes pleaded for a “full, free, and fair statement of all points of view:”

”(This) flaming horror (is not) from another planet.. (It is) only the magnified reflection of the war of the factory, the slum, and the foreign market.”  
He recommended on behalf of the council a “ministry of reconciliation (for) Unitarians to the war.”

Hearts everywhere cry out for succor, hands grope for guidance, eyes stare in darkness for the light..

Taft rose to take the floor in great anger, calling the report of Holmes for the council:  
“an insidious document. Are we, as Unitarians in favor of winning this war, or are we not?.” And he proposed a motion putting the Conference on record of  
“approving the measures of President Wilson to carry on the war.”

Holmes rose in the ensuing debate to state clearly where he stood:

“I am a pacifist. I am a non-resistant. I hate war, and I hate this war; so long as I live and breathe I will have nothing to do with this war or any war, so help me God.”

Taft responded,

“Our house is afire and we must put it out. It is no time to consider whether the firemen are using the best kind of water!”

The pro-war motion was then voted in the affirmative, 236-9.

When the Unitarian Association’s Directors met in April 1918, they confirmed their support for the war, and added that “any society employing a minister not willing.. (to be) an outspoken supporter of the United States in the vigorous and resolute prosecution of the war cannot be considered eligible for aid from the Association.”

The response of John Haynes Holmes was to withdraw from the fellowship of Unitarian churches and to undertake the new movement of community churches with his colleague Clarence Skinner of Boston and Crane Theological School.

See David Parke, “A Wave at Crest”  
in *A Stream of Light*, edited by Conrad Wright, pp100-194

The liberal optimism as expressed in the Universalist Declaration of Social Principles of 1917 seemed unrealistically utopian in the wake of the slaughter of the First World War and the ensuing revolution and struggle in the emerging Soviet Union. To even return to a normal everyday life, let alone create “a new heaven and a new earth,” presented a great challenge for religious folk. We are familiar with the resurgence of the neo-Calvinist judgments of the inherent evil of human nature that revived in Christian theology as orthodox thinkers dealt with horrors of the 20th century.

Nonetheless the Universalist Conventions over the next few years reaffirmed their 1917 Declaration of Social Principles without doing much more than appointing a Social Service Secretary for the Convention. ‘Generally speaking, throughout this post-war period, the practical social idealism of our people was at a low ebb,’ wrote Emerson Lalone, historian and editor to be of the *Universalist Leader* magazine. Lalone, *op.cit.*, 1939, p.77

Despite this retrospective judgment and likely even spurred on by the horrors of the memory of the first world war, the resilience of a liberal religious vision persisted and significant movement for peace revived and grew stronger as the 1920s wore on, even as the 1930s rampant depression and rumblings of troubling world events reverberated..

Universalists at their 1921 Convention in Hudson, N.Y. became so heated about calling for the release of the socialist Eugene Debs, jailed during the war for advocating peace, that the meeting had to be quieted and adjourned by one of the clergy getting up and praying for harmony. Miller, op. cit. Vol. .II. p.503

At the 1923 Hartford Convention , the Universalists undertook a “Christ Crusade ...to promote peace, outlaw war, exact respect for law and secure through cooperation with other religious forces in the world a nobler brotherhood.” They called for the Senate to ratify U.S. membership in the League of Nations and for entrance into the World Court and to “cause war to be recognized as a crime in international law.” The Convention created a Commission on Foreign Affairs and World Peace, with little budget, but with a mandate to ”lead in the movement sweeping the country for peace.”

The Universalists joined with the Methodists and later 20 other denominations to “outlaw the whole war system.” In 1928, Universalists gave support with others in endorsing the Kellogg-Briand Pact later to be adopted by the U.S., renouncing war as an instrument of national policy. They further urged that the phrase “except for defense in case of attack “ be dropped from the Pact, thereby reaffirming what Benjamin Rush and the 1790 Universalist Convention had suggested that “there is a time coming, when the light and Love of the gospel, shall put an end to all wars,”—that even defensive wars should be seen as morally unacceptable.

The Commission on Foreign Affairs and World Peace saw to it that as many representatives as could be afforded, were sent to meetings promoting world peace. The reverend F.O. Holmes, Skinner’s mentor minister from New York City, was sent as a representative to peace conferences in Prague and Geneva to help plan a Universal Religious Peace Conference to be held in 1930.

As the peace movement grew and anti-war feelings swept the country in the 30’s , in a questionnaire sent out nationwide, 200 Universalist and Unitarian ministers responded that “churches should refuse to sanction or support any future war or participate individually as combatants.” In 1934, 35% of all Universalist and Unitarian clergy responded and a sizable majority supported the League of Nations, even though it was faltering in its effort to keep the peace. 80% of Unitarian Universalists ministers opposed military training in public high schools and colleges. In 1936, The Universalists at a national convention pledged themselves with other denominations to present “a common front to outlaw and banish war.”

(1936 Universalist General Convention) Russell Miller, **The Larger Hope**, Vol. II,pp.485-6

What these figures illustrate is that in both denominations, the peace commitment was growing strong among clergy. Though the Unitarians, because of their fierce freedom of belief for both individuals and congregations and their loose association ties were adverse to taking stands on issues as an association. Most social action as a group had been done by the Unitarian Fellowship for Social Justice, formed as an independent agency in 1908 ”for united action against all forms of social injustice,” by John Haynes Holmes and others. The Universalists on the other hand, since the first gatherings in 1785 in Oxford, Mass., and 1790 in Philadelphia, agreed to make a compact as a denomination, and to shape a statement of Faith and a Plan of Government, to which were attached five recommendations, including specific statements for the elimination of slavery and war.

These positions were reasserted over the years, and as we have noted in the 1920s and 1930s they became particularly strong, especially when the Universalists voted to join in 1924 with 20 other Christian denominations, including the Methodists, “to outlaw and banish war.”

In the period of the 1920s and 1930s, the issue of conscientious objection to war on religious principle came to the fore in the Universalist Convention. After a failure to obtain such an endorsement of conscientious objection at the 1923 Convention, in 1925 at Syracuse, N.Y., the Rev. Griswold Williams of Reading, PA., presented a resolution to the effect that members of the Universalist Church had “the right to refuse on conscientious grounds to participate in any warfare” and that “the spiritual authority and leadership of Jesus” meant “a complete condemnation and renunciation of violence between nations as well as between individuals, operative even in times of warfare itself.” Though highly controversial, the motion passed 85-53. In 1931 at the Convention in Buffalo, an attempt was made to incorporate this right of conscientious objection into the church’s constitution. Instead it was referred to a By Laws Committee. In 1933 at the Worcester Convention, a new Article XIII was added to the Laws of Fellowship which provided that the “spirit of the Universalist faith sanction(s) refusal of all forms of military service if such refusal is based on conscientious grounds.” The secretary of the Convention was then instructed to request of the federal government to recognize that this action gives to Universalists “the same legal status as afforded to Quakers.” Although the government under Roosevelt’s Administration was not forthcoming, sidestepping the issue, the Universalists kept up the dialogue, and reaffirmed the rights of their members to conscientious objection. They then instructed the secretary of the 1939 Washington D.C. Convention “to so inform the President and Secretary of State of the United States.” Additionally, the new Universalist Superintendent Robert Cummins called for “a ringing pronouncement telling the world that should the United States be dragged into this heinous war, a Universalist refusing to take up arms against a fellow being, shall remain a member of the Universalist Church in good standing.” Ibid. Miller, Vol. II, pp.488-90

In the midst of the crisis of the depression, an internal Department of Social Relations was created in the American Unitarian Association, and finally in 1934, allowed to speak out independently of the Association on some labor- corporate issues as well as in support of the World Court and the League of Nations. The long restraint within the Unitarian Movement as a whole, however, in engaging in the critical issues of the world, was so apparent, that a leading member of the Layman’s League, Kenneth McDougall of the Wellesley Hills Church, raised some money in the spring of 1934 and carried a barnstorming message up and down the churches of the eastern coast, leveling a frontal assault upon the stagnation of the American Unitarian Association.

Neither today nor for several years past have we had a program worthy of our traditions and opportunities. We drift, we play with such naive notions as “putting 100,00 Unitarians to work,” we contemplate a happy future with annual increases of 5%. We content ourselves with exchanging good will with a group of Filipinos...We are known less and less as a pioneering and prophetic church. ...Referring to the inbreeding of its leadership, he finally concluded: Let there be for the Association a commission of appraisal!

At the May Meetings that year, the reverend Frank Holmes, Chair of the Committee on Resolutions got up and proposed the formation of a Commission of Appraisal to clarify “principles and changes in policy, program and organization, wherever and however they may be necessary.” It was passed unanimously.

From David Parke, “A Wave at Crest” op.cit in Stream of Light

One of the leaders of the movement for this new Commission of Appraisal, and serving upon it, was the influential Dr. Aurelia Henry Reinhardt, president of Mills College, and later moderator of the American Unitarian Association. She was one of the strongest proponents for peace in this period between the two world wars. She was an avid supporter of the League of Nations, a member of a dozen peace groups and spoke widely of the need for a world organization for Peace. She was later appointed as a U.S. delegate to the organizing meetings of the United Nations in San Francisco in the Spring 1945. Her work in defining the need for a strong contemporary worship life in our churches (she was a member of the Oakland Unitarian Church) was one report among the work of many that contributed to a fresh, revitalizing evaluation of where Unitarianism could be relevant to the “New Age.”

The result was the fashioning of a legendary renewal of energy and purpose that developed into an upsurge and strengthening of our emergent liberal religious movement in the States—reaching a classic high water mark of expansion, self-definition and self-esteem that culminated in the consolidation of the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America into what we now know as the Unitarian Universalist Association. One of the recommendations of the Commission of Appraisal adopted by the Association was the suggestion that the movement “had to re-educate itself to act cooperatively...to show the importance of acting organically.” This applied to pragmatic church matters and to issues of justice and peace as well. In fact the Unitarians in 1944 agreed to support conscientious objector status to members who were so committed. This renewed sense of a need for movement activism was very much put forward as the Unitarians and Universalists discussed the future of their newly consolidated movement in the early 1960s. And in fact, this revived consolidated body acted with unusual unity in the profound struggles of the 1960s and 70s both in civil rights, the struggle for justice for black Americans and the unified action to stop the war in South East Asia.

(See *Stream of Light*, edited Conrad Wright, pp 125—128, and *The Free Church In A Changing World*, Reports of the Commissions To Churches and Fellowships of the UUA, Boston, 1963)

Then the Second World War burst upon the scene, first the Spanish Civil War and the skirmishing that crushed the valiant Spanish hopes for a Republic and social justice. Followed by the continued giving in to the Hitler in the Ruhr and Czechoslovakia, the Unitarian Prime Minister Chamberlain hoped he could satisfy Hitler’s appetite with a piece of the loaf of Europe. However Hitler sent his blitzkreig into Poland after making his temporary pact with Stalin. Stalin had tried to buy time, realizing neither Britain nor France were slow to ally with the Soviets. Both Britain and France still hoped that Hitler only intended to do in the Communist Russians .for lebensraum to the East. .

However, the big world war was on and some 22 of the Universalist ministers signed onto the list of conscientious objectors. 8 theological students from Union Theological Seminary refused to register for the Selective Service and were given jail sentences of a year and a day, This despite the fact that they could have gotten deferments. An Adin Ballou Pacifist Fellowship was formed at Crane Theological School at Tufts University in 1941 and fifteen students joined as members. At the Universalist convention that year 30 ministers and their wives signed a pledge “ to refuse to participate in or give moral support to war.” My own father, Alan Sawyer, who was a Unitarian and pacifist in identity and later became President of the Universalist Church of America( after the war was over) enlisted .in the Coast Guard Auxiliary and served on weekends patrolling off the Cape Ann Peninsula of the

Massachusetts coast in a motor boat, scouting for German U-boats that were a threat to shipping to Europe.

The General Convention of 1943 during the 2nd World War reaffirmed the provision granting full fellowship to conscientious objectors in wartime and also providing some financial assistance to those who spent time in work camps as an alternative to war service. Following the war, the General Assembly continued to express anti-war views. They opposed the continuing of the Selective Service System and the peacetime draft by a two to one margin. The conscientious objector status and list continues to be maintained and is still in effect as a denominational registration program to this day.

Miller, op.cit. V II. Pp. 490-92.

As the Second World War was coming to an end, there were high hopes for organizing for world peace. In 1943 the Universalist Convention had already pledged themselves:

“to abjure war as a method of solving international disputes and shall affirm their faith in ..building a lasting peace...we must build an international order in which the sovereign power to settle international disputes resides in a league or assembly of all people.”

The United Nations Organization was founded in April 1945 and arrangements were made for a recovering world economy with the instituting of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund organized at the Bretton Woods Conference.. As President Franklin Roosevelt expressed in a text, intended for radio that he did not live to give:

Today, as we move against the terrible scourge of war—as we go forward toward the greatest contribution that any generation of human beings can make in this world—the contribution of lasting peace—I ask you to keep your faith. I measure the sound, solid achievement that can be made at this time by the straight –edge of your confidence and your resolve.

Text of radio speech to have been delivered by radio 4/13/194

for Jefferson Dinner, reprinted in Christian Register (Unitarian) May 1945

Roosevelt died and the less experienced and less visionary Harry Truman came into office. He did not have the relationship with Stalin that Roosevelt had built. Truman came to his first Big 3 meeting at Potsdam to face the serious differences with Stalin about Poland's future and the knowledge of the recent successful testing of the atomic bomb at Los Alamos in his hip pocket. The Russian Army had occupied all the way to the Elbe River. Given their long-standing fear of the reality of continual invasions from the East, they were not about to give up their control on the ground in Eastern Europe. When Truman told Stalin about the atomic bomb, Stalin, to his surprise, didn't seem to have much of a reaction. We now know, Stalin, likely already knew about it. A British physicist working at Los Alamos, a Mr. Hall, admitted in an interview a few years ago that he had shared the technology of the atomic bomb with the Soviets because he didn't think that a U.S. monopoly of the atomic bomb was safe, that no one nation could be trusted alone with it. Then Truman decided to drop it on the populated cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The official reason given by our government was that this was to save many American soldiers, lives that would be lost in an all out invasion of the Japanese mainland, and to end the war as quickly as possible. It is now believed that the Japanese had already sent before the bomb was dropped, a reliably clear message through the Soviet Union to the effect that they would surrender if the position of the Emperor would be maintained. This is in fact was the position that the U.S. government

accepted a week or so later. In Secretary of War Henry Stimson's diary from that time, now available, he wrote that the main reasons for igniting that tremendous bomb was to be a signal to the Russians to halt in their tracks, to prevent them from sharing in the occupation of Japan, (though they were allowed to occupy the remote Northern Kurile Islands as agreed upon at Yalta), Mainly however, the bomb was intended to make them more amenable to U.S. interests in the future.

### Post World War II, the Cold War and U.S. Imperium

In fact the Cold War was now engaged and the situation on the ground was to remain stubbornly tense and intractable for the next 45 years. Germany was split with a dividing line right down the continent of Europe as the Big Four, the U.S. Britain, France and Soviet Union tediously and with continuing irritation worked out a fortified boundary. An inkling of the situation that was to develop was brought back from Europe by Paul Robeson, the gifted singer, actor and political leader who had warm relations with the Soviet leadership. He began to speak out about the recruitment by the U.S. Army and the Office of Strategic Services (the forerunner of the CIA) of Nazi generals, scientists and most importantly SS intelligence officers with special knowledge of Eastern Europe. To him this was the start of an engagement toward war with Russia, an ally and friend in the recent struggle against fascism. Then he announced that black people in America would not be willing to fight against a nation friendly to black people abroad, especially when blacks were being lynched in numbers right here at home in the U.S.. Of course the U.S. Government moved quickly against him. He was excoriated in the newspapers and protests were generated against him by white gangs when he performed, particularly at Peekskill, N.Y. He was called before the House Un-American Activities Committee and had his passport taken away to travel abroad. This crimped his livelihood since he was immensely popular as an artist and American representative abroad. Pressure was also put on Robeson at home, depriving him of venues to perform, further crippling his livelihood. Robeson's situation stands as a more extreme example of the loss of freedom here at home, created by the witch hunt we now call "McCarthyism." This political fear can better be understood as a virulent form of opportunistic demonism that attacked liberal democratic support for the rights and conditions of working people, particularly minorities. These "bleeding hearts," as liberal citizens were called by the cold warriors, were vilified as subversive agents working from without and within, to bring down our American way of life, i.e. the dominant white, free enterprise Christian culture, behind which, in reality, stood and still stands the 1% or less who own 80% or more of the nation's wealth.

This internal ideological struggle in the United States impacted the Unitarian Universalist movement in post-world war II United States. It created a split between liberals and those of a more radical perspective---socialist leaning UU's who had been more sympathetic to the revolution in the Soviet Union and toward strides among working people in our own country in the 30s. Even the purging of more radical and liberal communist leadership by Stalin in the 30s had not shaken the faith of some in the superiority of the Soviet system. When the pre-war Hitler-Stalin Pact divided up Poland and the rest of Eastern Europe, internal struggles also took place all over the world between those sympathetic to the Soviet Union, and so-called democratic "liberals." Or socialists. This left deep wounds between politically active Unitarian Universalist leaders, which manifested itself in a struggle over the editorship of the Unitarian magazine, *The Christian Register*, in

1946-7. The explosion of the atomic bombs on Japan had been the first signal to the Russians of a new more difficult climate of relationship. Many Unitarian Universalists realized that the existence of such devastating weapons created a whole new necessity for a stronger peace movement to end the warfare system. As Albert Einstein so well said, "the existence of the atomic bomb has changed everything except men's thinking." Instead President Truman and Secretary of State George Marshall, on behalf of the U.S. power structure, began a more aggressive strategy toward the defense and even expansion of US economic, political and military interests,

The first area of struggle was in Greece and Turkey, critical geopolitically for the Eastern Mediterranean area—control of the Dardanelles and keeping the Soviets bottled up in the Black Sea. In Greece the German occupation had been resisted by a partisan movement made up of nationalist, liberal democrats and a strong communist party. When the war ended, an exile group led by liberal George Papandreau allied itself with elements of the left-wing resistance movement that had de facto control in Greece. The British army returned under Churchill and began to support the wealthier monarchist elements looking for a return of the former King Paul. Some of the monarchists had collaborated openly with the Nazi, They began to force some of the left partisans out of leadership positions, until this group finally withdrew completely from government. The communist and democratic socialists found themselves under siege. Some were even imprisoned and executed. A "free election" then was pushed by the British and Americans for early March 1946 under intolerable conditions of repression. The Left boycotted this election as they faced an offensive by right-wing paramilitary elements. The election was won by the populist right-wing monarchist party. At this point civil war broke out. The British, now well in over their heads, appealed to the US to pick up their imperial baggage. Churchill came to Fulton, Missouri to give his famous "Iron Curtain Speech." Truman followed up by going to Congress to ask for Aid to Greece and Turkey (where a similar struggle was taking place) to "save them from communism." In reality it was economic and military aid to a monarchist-military regime in Greece that was to impose an undemocratic repressive government that would last for the next 30 years. It was not until 1981 before this repressive right-wing Greek government was replaced in a truly free election by a socialist party led by the economics professor from Berkeley, Andreas Papandreau, the son of George Papandreau . His father George Papandreau, the liberal, had been blocked from being elected by the British and American intervention in 1946 backing the right wing monarchy.

It was in this context that the **Christian Register** struggle took place. The reverend Stephen Fritchman , had been the adult leader of the Unitarian Youth Movement, was an avowed socialist and now was the able editor of the Register magazine. Even his enemies, believed Fritchman had created a very interesting and well edited magazine.. Yet a watch-dog committee was created to keep an eye over the editorial policy because there had been complaints that he was too pro-Soviet. When Fritchman prepared an editorial for the magazine opposing Truman's proposed Aid to Greece and Turkey, he was told not to publish it in the magazine by this editorial watch-dog committee. Fritchman then resigned his editorship and carried the battle to the 1946 May Meetings of the American Unitarian Association to settle the issue. The censoring of his editorials by the President of the AUA and the watchdog committee was upheld .by the gathered body of Unitarian Association members and Fritchman was not reinstated.

The prophetic quality of that editorial (printed publicly for the first time, 31 years later in Stephen Fritchman's 1977 auto-biography, Heretic) is most apparent today.. Especially so after the true history of our intervention and repression of the democratic process in Greece

has become better known. When President Clinton on his trip to Greece in the late 1990s was met by protesting students and workers, in order to be heard in Greece, he found it necessary to apologize to the Greek people for the brutality of that military take-over against their people, that had been supported by the U.S. and Britain.

Fritchman in 1946 in the censored editorial wrote:

“Are we going to substitute Truman’s two worlds for Franklin Roosevelt’s and Wendell Willkie’s one world? Are we going to support reactionary governments, from Turkey to Korea, if only they will fly the flag of anti-Soviet hatred? Are we going to call “Communist “ every government that resolutely seeks reform and change for the welfare of its people?...Are we, in the name of a world-wide Crusade against Communism, going to make the name of America despised by every race and nation that has hopes for peace and security through the United Nations?

America holds the key position in the question of world peace. Our government can determine whether the democratic will of free people is advanced or delayed, whether a few Americans dealing with investments in foreign markets can betray our nation into steps leading to war, whether we play our rightful role in the United Nations; whether our sons die on foreign battlefields is up to us.

Stephen Fritchman , Heretic, Beacon Press, Boston , 1977

Censored editorial intended for publication May 1946, Christian Register

The fierce struggle of the Cold War all over the world, for which there was much responsibility and blame, both on the part of the United States and the Soviet Union, vastly complicated any movement for peace in both our nations and in the world. Fed by enormous fears, whipped up by constant propaganda, an emotional climate was created of constant threat of war. An arms race of devastating weapons and the actual outbreak of war in Asia heated up the Cold War. This stunted any religious vision and bent the human spirit toward fortifying an expanding U.S. Empire.

First there was the tense interface across occupied Germany. Then the costly Korean hot War in far-off Asia made it difficult here in the States to see through the continuous propaganda, here at home, demonizing Communism. Thus the U.S. government and media justified our intervention at the head of the “United Nations Forces” in Korea against the North Korean Communists who had “invaded“ South Korea. This was the story in spite of the fact that the quality journalist, I.F. Stone pointed out the complexity of the threat and counter-threat, along with guerrilla operations from both sides, that had instigated these two repressive undemocratic governments against each other in the divided North and South Korea. This tension ignited the Korean Civil War. The U.S. hadn’t trusted the bellicose South Korean Syngman Rhee government with large weapons and when South Korea was over run with Stalingrad-type tanks, The U.S. got UN backing to bring in our big guns (the U.N Security Council was being boycotted at the time by the Russians for their failure to replace the Taiwan representative with the new People’s Republic of China delegates) MacArthur drove them back, but then he made threatening moves toward the Chinese border, even bombing their territory, despite China’s warning that they would defend themselves. The Chinese came into the war, wreaking havoc on our soldiers, driving them back through the cold snows of winter to the 38th parallel where the war had begun,. Eisenhower was elected President on a promise to negotiate an end to the war, and he finally did. He wisely stated that we should never get engaged in a land-war in Asia. Though there were those like MacArthur and his China Lobby backers, who believed we ought to

overthrow this new People's Republic of China, avowedly led by the Marxist-Communist, Chairman Mao Tse Tung.

The onset of Cold and Hot War, right on top of the supposedly concluded World War II, not only disappointed the majority of people who wanted peace, it created deep divisions in the U.S. body politic. It particularly split the more progressive, liberal groups which were in general the constituencies of the Unitarian and Universalist congregations. The divide usually came over question of working for peace with the Soviet Union, Persons grounded in deep commitment to freedom of expression and support of the Bill of Rights were willing to back the right of free expression for those expressing these views. This split became very severe in the Unitarian movement. There freedom of belief was of such a prime value that it had hindered the Unitarian Association from taking positions on issues, that would offend those who felt differently. The Fritchman issue shows how sensitive the main body of Unitarians were to being identified by outsiders with a position considered remotely acceptant of peace with or sympathetic with the Soviet Union.. Of course, it merely brought more attention to the liberal tendencies of our Unitarian Universalist movement that did not accord with the prevailing jingoistic attitudes. Similar contradictions appeared among Universalists, though the Universalists had a long heritage of taking stands as a church on controversial issues. When an attack on peace activists did break into the open, liberal leadership came to the fore and was able both to deflect it and maintain a breadth of freedom of discourse. The struggle to support and defend the Charles Street Meeting House project of the Mass, Universalist convention from 1949-53 for its liberal humanistic and world peace perspectives when it came under attack from its more conservative Universalist critics, is a case in point.

At the very time the Unitarians were supporting the effort of their administration to throttle the editorial voice of Stephen Fritchman, the 1946 Universalist General Assembly in Troy, N.Y was opposing the continuation of the Selective Service Act in peacetime as "an extension of militarism into the post war life of the United States.". They also opposed compulsory military training and voted to "set up an international body for the control of atomic energy," backing the U.S. Acheson report that "there can be no international cooperation which does not presuppose an international community of knowledge.". In the 1951 Assembly at Portland, Maine they "reaffirmed, "the right of members and ministers to affirm their convictions of conscientious objectors to war on religious grounds," and further expressed "support of all those commissions of the United Nations which seek and promote world unity and cooperation."

At the same time that there was a growing political conflict and a clamping down on political freedom, due to the hot war going on in Korea, our U.S. soldiers dying as they attempted to push back the North Koreans, The Universalist Convention came out against both the McCarran and Smith Acts which stripped naturalized citizens of their citizenship. These Federal Acts also called for deporting them for belonging to so-called radical, disapproved groups and allowed for the jailing of members of the Communist Party. The Convention stated that these acts "destroyed civil liberties of all Americans" by giving "government officials arbitrary power ( to) proscribe almost any organization peaceably agitating for social economic or political change.(This by) invoking intimidation, intolerance and persecution to stifle discussion and dissent without which democracy can not function." These were bold and relevant stances for the times and revealed a commitment to a peaceful world and the principles of democracy inherent in the Universalist heritage. This came at a time that these principles were in growing jeopardy across the nation.

It was left for the influential Unitarian preacher A. Powell Davies of the All Souls Unitarian Church in Washington D.C. to have a most direct effect on the Washington political establishment as this cruel attack on alleged Communists was rising to a fever pitch with the investigations of the House Un-American and the Senate Internal Security Committees. In Davies' congregation sat some of the leading political figures in Washington, William Douglas of the Supreme Court and some notable Congressional leaders. Though Davies was outspokenly anti-communist and critical of socialism and had openly opposed Fritchman's position as editor, he spoke out vehemently and courageously against the persecution of persons before the committee for their beliefs. In fact, he said, there were plenty of laws to handle any criminal acts anyone might commit, or had committed:

“The distinction which the American people must learn to make is between active conspirators against their free society and those who hold unpopular –and even repugnant –opinions. Unless freedom protects enemies of the latter sort who are not perilous to it—protects them, that is to, by permitting them the same civil rights that are claimed for the society as a whole—the danger is that freedom will not be able to protect its friends.”

A. Powell Davies, from **The Urge to Persecute**, Beacon Press, 1953

By negotiating an end of the fighting in Korea, seemingly the war was over.. Little was the public aware of the ongoing war just below the surface. In 1953, the U.S. CIA working with the British engineered a military coup that overthrew the elected government of Premier Mossedegh in Iran. This followed after he nationalized the British oil concessions in that country. This brought back into power the brutal regime of Shah Pahvali. Similarly in 1954 when an elected government in Guatemala attempted to introduce land reform and redistribute some of the huge land holdings of the United Fruit Company, the CIA again intervened and put a US-backed military dictatorship in control. In 1956, the CIA cooperated with a military takeover in Indonesia, in which up to 500,000 political activists, identified as purported Communists, were systematically slaughtered, from lists the US-CIA supplied General Suharto. Then came the CIA assassination of the nationalist leader Patrice Lumumba of the Congo, replacing him with the compliant, corrupt General Mobutu in that mineral-rich region. This was followed by the CIA Bay of Pigs operation that Vice President Richard Nixon helped plan in the Eisenhower Administration to reassert US control over Cuba, and rid the nation of Fidel Castro. When that operation unraveled due to poor planning and a much stronger Cuban resistance movement than they had calculated, questions began to be raised about these kinds of CIA special operations and the legitimacy of carrying out foreign policy with this sort of undercover methods with no democratic approval or accountability to the elected Congress.

It was at the beginning of the Kennedy Administration that a peace movement began to gain strength in the US. The government push for the building of bomb shelters in people's yards brought home the reality of the state of terror in which we were living. The use of these terrible weapons was given credibility by such advocacy. The peace movement focused at first on eliminating above-ground testing which spewed lethal radiation into the atmosphere. In April 1962, I found myself encouraged by women members of my church and the Women's Strike for Peace to join in a demonstration at the Rocketdyne missile manufacturing plant in Canoga Park in the San Fernando Valley, Calif.. This was my first vigil but hardly my last during the ensuing years. The anti-nuke movement kept growing with participants from many of our Unitarian Universalist groups, particularly in Santa Monica, Westwood, 1st Church L.A., Sepulveda and Claremont. At the time of the Cuban

Missile crisis in the fall of 1962, the potential for widespread devastation from the use of nuclear weapons became a clear reality. A full page ad was inserted in the L.A. Times to which the reverend Stephen Fritchman of the First Unitarian Church of Los Angeles, Rabbi Leonard Beerman of the respected Leo Baeck Temple and myself, minister of the (San Fernando)Valley Unitarian Universalist Church and a few others signed our names. The ad called for settling the crisis by withdrawing obsolete U.S. missiles with war heads from Turkey for the withdrawal of the Soviet missiles with war heads from Cuba. This had been suggested by Adlai Stevenson in a cabinet discussion a few days earlier, though publicly rejected by the Kennedy administration. In fact this mutual withdrawal of missiles did become a basis for agreement with the Soviets, along with a private assurance that the U.S. would not invade Cuba. Both were kept secret. for the time being.

After the assassination of Jack Kennedy, the new President, Lyndon Johnson immediately reversed the recently announced Kennedy policy of a step by step withdrawal of all U.S. advisors from the Vietnam war by Christmas of 1965. As the Johnson regime stepped up the the Vietnam War and began to introduce tens of thousands of U.S. ground troops after the Tonkin Gulf congressional resolution, the peace movement grew very rapidly. The Unitarian Universalist movement contributed its part to this growth, yet it was widespread across the whole nation, mobilized particularly by students and faculty in the colleges and the swiftly emerging youth revolution in 1966 onwards. A necessary condition for this to occur was the dispelling of the cultural and political neurosis of fear about communism and to expose it as a propaganda leverage for increased military spending and the justification of war by the growing U.S. Imperium. . The Women's Strike for Peace movement administered the first big blow .to this up-to- that-time, sure-fire tactic. When the Senate Internal Security Committee hauled their group in for a hearing, the Women's Strike for Peace leadership spoke back fearlessly to the committee's charges of having communist members and refused to give them any membership lists. ( unlike the SANE Nuclear group). A few months later in 1963 the House Un-American Activities Committee was met by a vigilant and noisy protest demonstration in San Francisco's City Hall. This included a number of Unitarian Universalists from San Francisco and Berkeley.. The committee instructed the police to handle the protesters roughly, and they were dragged down flights of stairs in front of the TV cameras.. This brutal behavior against the protesters was an action from which that committee never recovered.

By 1964, a resolution was circulated in the Parish Poll of Unitarian Universalists that "urged our government to reconvene the Geneva Conference to consider demilitarizing and neutralizing under international agreement Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam." Though this resolution written by the Community Church of New York was not one of the resolutions receiving enough votes to automatically be placed on the General Assembly's agenda, it was placed on the floor by members of the San Fernando Valley Unitarian Universalist Church, by a 2/3rds vote of the delegates. It was then passed by an overwhelming margin, the first anti-war resolution of that era and the very first of the newly consolidated Unitarian Universalist Association. From this resolution flowed a very engaged action program led in part by the President of the UUA, Dana MacLean Greeley and a number of our congregations.

Greeley stepped right out on this issue of the Vietnam War. He took leadership among religious movements both in this country as well as traveling around the world to Geneva, Tokyo and Saigon as part of a newly organized Conference for Religion and Peace, a world interfaith movement. As he undertook this work he found himself criticized by Board members of the UUA and others, Greeley would refer them back to the resolution

passed at the 1964 Assembly. This resolution gave him backing both within our Unitarian Universalists movement and among other religious groups nationally and internationally to work to stop the war in Southeast Asia. Churches all over the country began to get involved: and UUs helped established Peace Centers independent of the churches, to work in the wider community -- in the San Fernando Valley, in Walnut Creek, Venice, West LA, and Berkeley in California, Eugene and Seattle in the Northwest and in Boston and New York City and their suburbs. The peace movement was spreading. Unitarian Universalists were involved in creating such centers and supporting with voluntary contributions and action throughout the communities..

By 1967-68, the size of the peace movement dwarfed all previous peace movements in the U.S. Young people, college students;folks of all ages were willing to take an active part. Particularly this was so as the political movement joined up with the cultural movements of music, dance and theater, providing a lively joyful spirit that leavened the deservedly angry protests against the brutal war going on in Asia in the name of us citizens.

Soon the seriousness of such resistance efforts became evident, in many of our UU churches, in Whittier, Los Angeles, Santa Monica, Berkeley, San Francisco, Seattle, Chicago, Arlington St. Boston and Bedford, Mass, Community Church in New York City, among many others. In some cases sanctuary was provided for war-resisting soldiers, who were often dragged out of the churches by other soldiers who invaded the church., This led to great controversy, and in some cases divisions within the churches. One of our churches in South Bend, Indiana, was burned to the ground for merely providing public draft counseling for war resisters. Very simply, most of our churches, like the rest of the U.S., were in the end, touched deeply by that war. Our Department of the Ministry estimated that more than 67 of our ministers were wounded professionally by these struggles, and in some cases had to interrupt or even leave their ministerial careers. By the end of the war, opposition to the Vietnam war among our UU congregations was nearly total. This became especially evident when our UU Beacon Press published the complete Pentagon Papers, courageously secreted out of the National Security Council by one of their advisors , Dan Ellsberg. These papers exposed the true history of this cruel war. To the credit of President Bob West and the Board of Trustees of the UUA, when faced with onerous threats from the Nixon Administration, they fought the attempt to suppress and censor the publication of these papers with every resource they had. They successfully stood up for their publication using the principle of “freedom of the press.” This principle had long been a bulwark of our UU heritage, ever since Servetus had been burned at the stake in Geneva in 1553, with his book bound to his thigh, and the Rakovian Press had been founded in 1585 by the first organized Unitarian group—the Polish Brethren, who sent “heretical” literature all over Europe.. By now the end of the long perilous Vietnam war was only a matter of time and not long after it ended, the Nixon regime was exposed, and Nixon forced to leave office.

Unitarian Universalists played a salient role in the very broad coalition of religious, political, and cultural groups who were part of this growing peace movement that supported ending the war. Certainly the Vietnam people’s own resistance in their liberation struggle was what in fact ended colonialism in their nation, yet .the resistance movement here at home, in the main non violent, was a significant factor. In April 1969, the protests and activities of the college and youth movements had grown so large that Nixon and his people: Hoover, Kissinger, Rehnquist, Mitchell, Kleindienst, et al, met to decide how to cripple the student movement so as to be able to carry on their war. From this Miami planning meeting ensued the Orangeburg S.C., People’s Park, Kent State, and Jackson State massacres that managed to dampen down the protest movement for a while only. When Nixon attempted to carry

out his “secret plan” to end the war that he promised during the 1968 election --- his plan being to threaten the use of the nuclear bomb if the Vietnamese refused to negotiate to end the war on his terms (as Eisenhower had managed to do in Korea) Nixon wasn’t able to follow up the threat because, as he wrote in his memoirs, there were too many protesters in the streets here in the States for him to be able to get away with dropping the bomb.

UU President Dana Greeley showed bold, courageous leadership in the peace movement and our people pulled along beside him in the main. Yes there were divisions and painful episodes within congregations. Yet there was as well, a development of a courageous spirit, which strengthened our Unitarian Universalist fiber and resonated with the legacy of our ancestors who had before us taken strong, principled positions..

With the end of the Vietnam war, many were still living the illusion that this was basically a peaceful nation that many of us had been born into; that the Vietnam war was an exceptional blunder. It definitely was not part of this country’s heritage where freedom and justice for all and the spreading of democracy in the world, was our prime intention. Very shortly after the end of the Vietnam war, the Berrigan Brothers and their friends made a powerful statement relative to the on-going situation by burying a coffin in the lawn of the Pentagon. They were telling us that the US has created a huge expanding militarized economic system that projects imperial power into strategic areas of the planet in order to dominate valuable resources where possible. All our lifetime this has been mainly true. In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the U.S. has invaded 45 different countries, some more than once.

In 1979 inspired by a conference called together by traditional peace churches, the Mennonites, Friends and Brethren for a New Call to Peacemaking, UU leaders proposed to our General Assembly and passed a supportive resolution spelling out many of the necessary educational and action tasks that are incumbent on a movement such as ours committed that is “striving for a world community founded on the ideals of.(sister) and brotherhood, justice and peace.”

Peace education, support for conscientious objectors, tax resisters, and peace activists in our congregations, support of disarmament, opposition to the draft, ROTC a large reduction of the military budget, an ending of arms sales to other nations, as well as a program of economic conversion to non-military production were among the comprehensive program items advocated for our UU movement, in conjunction with these other peace churches.

It took a while after the end of the Vietnam war but the movement for peace began to slowly build again.—its goal to slow down the proliferation of weaponry, particularly nuclear weapons. The Nuclear Freeze movement was initiated. In many states, a vote was taken to freeze the production of nuclear weapons. A UU couple, Nick and Jo Seidita from Los Angeles, received the Holmes-Weatherley for helping to initiate the organization of this movement and mobilizing others across the country. Along with this electoral effort in the early 80s , civil disobedience activities began to sprout up at nuclear plants and facilities all over the country: at Seabrook, N.H. Oak Ridge, TE. Rocky Flats, CO. Hanford, WA., and Diablo Canyon and Livermore Weapons Lab in California. These actions, involving thousands of protesters, and highlighting the dangers of the nuclear production industry that had nearly melted down Three Mile Island and left Ukraine radioactive from the Chernobyl explosion. Many Unitarian Universalists participated in these activities along with many other religious and political activists. The interfaith-political Livermore Action Group succeeded in getting thousands to risk arrest and several thousands to go to jail. These arrest actions, over several years, at this largest laboratory in the world, all for the design of nuclear weapons, educated the country about the extent and costliness of the nuclear

weapons industry, that up to that time had been largely secret. The Livermore Action Group was initiated in 1980 at the Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists under the primary leadership of one of its stalwart members, Eldred Schneider.

By this time the anti-nuclear movement had grown to full scope, the Central American covert war was beginning to come into public focus. The U.S. had been supplying military dictatorships in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama with weapons, as well as training their officers and assisting them with US military advisors. . This was for the purpose of suppressing and destroying people's liberation movements, and had been going on systematically for more than twenty years. However the intensity of the struggle had developed into full-blown civil war across most of Central America. In Nicaragua, the Sandinista revolution took place, chasing the tyrant Somoza from power. Franklin Roosevelt had once referred to Somoza as "a bastard, but he's our bastard." Remnants of Somoza's security forces, were driven out of Nicaragua, reorganized and funded by the U.S. with CIA assistance, as a so-called Contra army. In El Salvador, increased financing and military assistance was given to the government to suppress a strong revolutionary uprising. This was done in Guatemala as well, where native Mayan peoples were struggling for survival and a fairer share of the land and resources. All was happening at once, and the Panamanian U.S. Canal Zone was being used by the U.S. for most of the 20th Century as the US command center for controlling this area of the world . However the Panamanians, under their military leader General Noriega, were increasingly less willing to have this repressive slaughter coordinated from their country. Especially this was so under Carter's Canal Treaty when Panama in theory had sovereign control. of the Panama Canal and the Canal Zone. The US Command center to coordinate this repression of Central America was now moved into Honduras under "proconsul" Ambassador John Negroponte. This created revolutionary resistance to US influence in that country as well.

The military repression in these countries became openly brutal. There was the coordinated campaign of the Contras to invade and destabilize the sovereign country of Nicaragua, massacring villagers and blowing up infrastructure. Also in El Salvador government soldiers and paramilitary private groups funded by the CIA ended up killing priests and nuns, even their Archbishop Romero, along with 10s of thousands of citizens. Up to 200,000 native Mayan Guatemalans were slaughtered also by their own government troops with US backing. Refugees began to stream into Mexico and this country. The refugees were aided by many religious groups, including Unitarian Universalists, in what was called the Sanctuary movement. Our Tucson, San Antonio, Los Angeles, Santa Monica and Seattle churches were especially active in this effort as were many other UUs. Of prime importance was the work of our Unitarian Universalist Service Committee which escorted congresspersons and other leaders into these countries to have a first-hand look at what was really happening. These contingents got to meet the people rather than the cooked-up US Embassy point of view, which was designed to cover up the repression, or at least to look the other way.

Over several years many congresspersons began to see what was really happening and to understand that the support of the contra army against the sovereign government of Nicaragua was both brutal, as well as illegal. When a covert CIA operation to mine Managua harbor was brought before the World Court and found illegal, and even as the Reagan government ignored this decision, the tide was beginning to turn against further funding of the Contra operation. In the U.S. in the winter of 1986, Brian Willson, a former UU Service Committee employee, heading the Viet Veterans against the War, lead a fast and sit-in on the steps of the National Capitol. On the day of the vote by the House of Representatives about

whether to fund the Contras as President Reagan had requested, Hal Carlstad, Eldred Schneider and I, of the Berkeley Fellowship of UUs, joined this valiant band of veterans on the Capitol steps. Congresswoman Barbara Boxer and Senator Ted Kennedy, both braved the chill and icy steps to address these Viet Veterans. Later that day the House voted to end the Contra funding by the US Congress. It was a jubilant day. We know now however that that was not the end of Contra funding. The Reagan government solicited gifts from rich oil potentates, slid money from illegal sales of weapons to the Iranians, and from a number of other sources to keep the funding flow going. Ultimately this government, through the use of these under-the-table operations, weakened Reagan's Presidency and nearly cost him and Vice President Bush their positions. It has been said that only the unsettled condition of the office of the Presidency by resignation and assassination, restrained the Congress from bringing impeachment proceeding.

This growing peace movement, organized according to affinity groups, bringing together various religious and political organizations committed to non-violence, flourished in the 1980s. Their philosophy grew directly out of the non violent activist and liberal Christian traditions of Adin Ballou and William Lloyd Garrison, Henry David Thoreau, Jenkin Lloyd Jones, Julia Ward Howe and Olympia Brown, John Haynes Holmes and Clarence Skinner, all but Garrison of our UU movement. These were joined by Tolstoy, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton, A.J. Muste and the Berrigan brothers. These leaders created a swelling number of others in our own time.

George Bush came into the Presidency without his major role in the Central American operations and the illicit funding of weaponry to Iran and Iraq being fully exposed. He carried out two surgical invasions at the beginning of his term: Grenada, purportedly to displace a left wing leader, and in Panama supposedly to round up the former CIA operative, General Manuel Noriega, who had refused to allow US bases in his country to be used for training or as centers for operations in our Central American wars any longer. These invasions took place quickly with very little public criticism in the press or from the public. Noriega had been portrayed as a drug dealer, which he certainly was, though as part of the funding of CIA Central American operations. Five thousand innocent Panamanian citizens were killed, as a large force, led by General Colin Powell swooped through Panama City, to return Panama to U.S. control.

Then came the Iraq War, and all moved into high gear for both our military system and reawakened the somnolent peace movement. Before all this blazing glory of the Desert Storm TV action, the U.S. carried out a very hidden role in one of the longest and most brutal wars since Vietnam. This was the barely-reported war between Iraq and Iran from 1980 to 1988 that devastated their nations and cost many lives. This war began just after the Iranian revolution had disposed of the Shah and American domination over that country. Iraq invaded Iran after a century-long border dispute over valuable contingent oil fields and access rights on the main waterway where the Tigris-Euphrates River system empties into the Persian Gulf. Saddam Hussein, as a CIA "asset" received some American encouragement at the start in 1980, because U.S. hostages were still being held by Iran after the take over of our embassy by radicals revolutionaries in Teheran. The battle between Iraq and Iran was waged back in forth for years with enormous casualties—up to a million dead on both sides. The Reagan Campaign for President group provided weaponry to the Iranians at first, just after the Reagan regime was coming into office. This was part of the "October Surprise" deal that involved William Casey, a CIA man and campaign director for Reagan

and George H. W. Bush, another CIA man and Vice .Presidential.candidate. Casey, and probably Bush, negotiated to send along weapons and spare parts to Iran that had been in the pipeline to Iran in 1979, before the Shah had been deposed, in exchange for Iran promising not to release the American hostages until after the 1980 election. Carter by then, hopefully, would be voted out of office for failing to get the hostages released.

The war dragged on, and Saddam Hussein, who had long been supported by the CIA during his rise to control of the Baath party in Iraq, looked like he might lose the war to the radical Shiite-controlled Iran under Ayatollah Khomeini. The U.S. sent Donald Rumsfeld as a military envoy to prop up Iraq militarily. Chemical and biological materials for weapons were illicitly shipped from Germany and the US, in addition to conventional weapons. Also sophisticated AWACS intelligence capabilities were provided by means of the Saudis. In no case, according to a National Security Council directive, would Hussein be allowed to lose this war. The gas attacks that killed Kurds were in fact unleashed with chemical weapons the US helped provide Hussein.. They were used against Iran's soldiers, also killing Kurdish villagers. The US knew about the gas attacks at the time, in fact believing it would help turn the tide of the war, and turned their eyes the other way. The U.S. were building up Hussein to thwart the growing power of radical Shiite Iran. Meanwhile, Reagan or Bush or Weinberger, or whoever was in charge, traded TOW missiles to Iran in exchange for the release of important CIA hostages, such as Bill Buckley's brother, and used the money to support the Contras. Eventually, the US had to begin shelling tankers carrying Iran's export oil out of the Persian Gulf in order to force this deadly absurd war between Iraq and Iran to end. No wonder, given the covert clandestine, playing-both-sides-against-the-middle, treachery of the Reagan-Bush regime, and the failure of Congress to press for a full investigation, that the American public was totally baffled and ignorant of the dynamics of the IRAQ Wars that followed and that continue to cost us so many lives, so much money and have us o stuck in the sands of .the Middle East..

The first phase of the American War against Iraq began when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait. Again there was a border dispute where Hussein claimed the Kuwaitis were slant drilling into Iraqi oil fields and extracting billions of dollars of oil. Also they claimed Kuwait was putting more than their OPEC quota of oil onto the market, thus driving down the price of oil April Glaspie, our Ambassador in Iraq, at the time that Hussein was making noises and positioning his troops to invade Kuwait, told Hussein that the U.S. has "no opinion on the Arab-Arab conflicts, like your border agreements with Kuwait." Also CIA Director William Webster told Bush just 5 days before the invasion that an Iraqi invasion was imminent, and that the Iraqis would probably only annex the disputed Rumalia oilfield and 2 uninhabited islands blocking the Persian Gulf approaches to Iraq.

When the invasion of Kuwait happened, however, Prime Minister Thatcher at a conference that same evening in Colorado stiffened his resolve. She reminded him of how the Falkland war had helped solidify her hold on office. "George, now don't be wobbly," she is reputed to have said. A call took place to King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, in which Bush indicated that his oil fields might be the next target (contrary to intelligence estimates) and then Bush went onto U.S. TV to indicate that the Saudis had asked for US troops and said, "This will not stand, this aggression against Kuwait."

Kevin Phillips, *American Dynasty*, N.Y 2004, pp 507-8

. President Bush threatened to go to war to dislodge Hussein from Kuwait.He began to systematically put together the operation, shipping over the forces, the fleet and battle

carriers and putting the armored divisions on the ground in Saudi Arabia. He then went to the United Nations and got a resolution passed that Hussein should withdraw from Kuwait by January 15, 1991. He gathered Allies willing to fund the war (largely the Arab nations and Japan) and to promise troops (largely the Anglo nations and Europeans) and made it clear to Iraq that they had to get out or else. Meanwhile the Kuwaitis carried on a big money propaganda effort using an unidentified sobbing Kuwaiti princess who testified before a Senate Committee that she had watched the Iraqis take premature babies out of receptacles and allow them to die. Although patently untrue, all was uncritically received by senators and public alike.

The peace movement in the US slowly began to revive, though hardly as fast as Bush's military was preparing for action. It was clear that this situation in Iraq was part of a long continuing saga of the US and Europeans vying for control of the oil of the Middle East. Hussein and Iraq's claim to Kuwait, at the ancient mouth of the Tigris and Euphrates, had some historic substance, yet certainly his use of force for settling that claim, by attacking a sovereign neighbor, was not justified. Many in and out of government felt that a successful international economic boycott of the oil and other material needs of Iraq, over a long enough period of time, could force Hussein to a negotiated settlement--- that the dispute over the oil fields could be settled peacefully. A war would only bring great loss of life and huge destruction of Iraq's oil and other properties. In San Francisco and the Bay Area, interfaith leaders from the Friends, Methodists, Unitarian Universalists, Catholics, Jews and a number of others groups, began to meet weekly. The Reverend Victor Carpenter of the First Unitarian Church of San Francisco was elected Chair and a large public peace gathering was planned for the main Roman Catholic Cathedral in the city. Before the Desert Storm attack broke out, the main cathedral was jammed with up to 6000 people where an enormous offering was collected for the work of the Interfaith Witness for Peace Movement. This collection kept the Middle East Peace Committee, as it came to be called, financed for the next couple of years in the Bay Area. In the D.C. area, the UU Washington office helped organize 1200 Unitarian Universalists in a demonstration on January 11, 1991, led by UU President William Schultz in front of the White House to urge that an military invasion not be used, rather a continuation of the economic boycott authorized by the UN..

George H.W. Bush went through the necessary international UN steps, unlike his successors, Clinton and son W. Bush. First he went to the UN for a resolution to insist the Iraqis leave Kuwait by a January 15<sup>th</sup> ultimatum date. Then he lined up pledges and contributions from allies, money from Arab states and Japan, soldiers from the Anglo nations and Europe. Finally he went to the US Senate to get a supportive vote for his action to force Hussein out of Kuwait. The vote was extremely close, because there were many senators that still believed an economic boycott could be effective. But finally 52-48 voted for supporting Bush's action (including Senator Al Gore, future V.P and presidential candidate) And then the war was engaged---all glitter and hi tech TV action with very few bodies in view. The journalists were kept at briefing centers where General Schwarzkopf played the engaging, expert bantering commentator. The people saw very few Iraqi or American dead though many civilians were killed in the bombing that preceded the invasion and over 100,000 Iraqi troops were ploughed under the sands in a devastating assault with armored bulldozers and depleted uranium shells that incinerated their tanks. There was a turkey shoot on the "escape" route, littered with vehicles retreating to Iraq from Kuwait. Not so pretty! But our public was mostly shown the colorful hi tech shots from the heavens onto far away targets that went up in smoke. Bush's popularity was at record highs in the polls when the action was over. He stayed within the terms of the UN resolution that

Hussein's army get out of Kuwait. The UN invasion force was withdrawn from all but Kuwait, where permanent U.S. bases were established. Weapon supplies and a few troops were left in Saudi Arabian bases as well. Iraqi uprisings of Shiites in the south and Kurds in the north were encouraged by the U.S. after the invasion, but were cruelly suppressed by Hussein. However, the US and British imposed a domination of air space, to-called "no-fly zones" over large swaths of Iraqi air space, as well as a low grade war of destruction of Iraqi air defenses and the enforcement of a killing embargo on necessary equipment, medical supplies, and sale of oil. These were imposed by pressure of the U.S. and Britain in the UN Security Council and paradoxically called "sanctions." In terms of dismantling the Iraqi weapons systems, this was understandable, yet the necessary medicines, equipment for repairs, and oil revenues for economic sustenance were unnecessarily cruel and were carried on in one form or another for more than a decade and by the successor Clinton Administration. A visiting Harvard Medical team study, estimated, half way through the decade in 1995, that even in that time period, that nearly half a million Iraqi children had died from the effects of lack of medicines, malnutrition, and contamination caused by the conditions created by the embargo. Our UU General Assembly in 2000, managed to garner a majority on a resolution to oppose these "sanctions." Yet because it did not get two thirds vote, it was not officially adopted by the Assembly and the leadership of our UU movement did not proceed to advocate for it.

Only two years after this blitzkrieg attack by H.W. Bush and his subsequent high poll rating, he was defeated for reelection. Some say it was his coldness in relating to the U.S. public, Others say that his seeming inaction in dealing with a modest recession cost him. Certainly Ross Perot's down home attack on him, Perot's focus on the escalating debt and his vivid descriptive phrase of "that loud sucking sound" of jobs lost to a potential NAFTA, south of the border, hurt him. However, I would venture to suggest that this one-sided war, where the Iraqi devastation and bodies were hidden from the U.S. people, that this same public sensed after this action seemingly was all over, that they had a bad taste left in their mouths. We all could feel a sickness in our bellies from acts not in keeping with our more generous American ideals..

Bill Clinton with his warm smile and quick wit came into office with great promise. A change was seemingly in the offing. However, the sanctions against Iraq continued cruelly to injure, to kill the old and the young with bad water and lack of medicine, with the no-fly zones destabilizing and weakening the Iraqi nation. The UN inspection teams continued to destroy the chemical weapons and to tear apart any nuclear chemical and biological weapons programs that Iraq had assembled with the encouragement of the Reagan-Bush Administration before the Kuwait invasion.

Meanwhile attention turned mainly to Eastern Europe and the continuing destabilization of the former Yugoslavia. The death of the popular Tito had started the pulling apart of the different ethnic groups held together by the rigors of a communist state. When economic difficulties developed in the wake of the break up of the economies of Eastern Europe, old ethnic and economic ties going back to the beginning of the 20th Century came into play. This was so in the case of Germany and the provinces of Croatia and Slovenia. When the Germans put pressure on the US and Britain to recognize the independence of Croatia and Slovenia, the US finally went along when the Germans insisted they would recognize the independence of these provinces of Yugoslavia no matter what the United States did. Secretary of State James Baker later said in an interview on the Charley Rose show, that this had been the biggest mistake made during the H.W, Bush Administration. He admitted that the European powers ought to have taken measures to

make sure that the incendiary ethnic tensions would not explode into civil war before they recognized the independence of these parts of Yugoslavia. However the pressures of the Germans and other nations, including the U.S. for economic expansion and influence in Yugoslavia contributed along with the nationalist aspirations of the complex Balkan ethnic groups to ignite a smoldering powder keg. In area after area, particularly in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the killing and destruction between Bosnians and Croats and Serbs became heart rending—the saga of the former multinational city of Sarajevo—the massacre of the Muslim men in Srebrenica, as well as Serbians when they were displaced by Croats from Krajina. There was plenty of blame and responsibility for the killing to go around, yet it was the Yugoslav people who were the real losers..

It was most tragic that the United Nations, after promising safe havens, was unable to muster the peacekeeping corps necessary to defend those whom they had promised to protect. The U.S. dragged its feet in coming forward with the needed resources to help this happen. The Serbs brutally used the armies of the State to cut down what had been their own citizens. Outside economic corporate interests in Western Europe and the U.S. used their nations governments to greedily carve up and destroy what had once been a fairly liberal model of a successful socialist economy.

When President Clinton finally threatened to bomb to relieve the siege of Sarajevo, and then did so, intervening with NATO forces, I commended him, thinking this was a restrained and legitimate use of force to stop the immediate bloodshed. I further advocated that he must immediately work to set up on-going, trained and mobile U.N policing corps, made up of the smaller nations with no vested interest in the area, to play this role in the future. This is not the proper task for U.S. and NATO forces, having a vested interest in such actions. I now realize I was mistaken at the time to approve of this seemingly life-saving bombing, even though it finally forced President Milosevic of Yugoslavia and others to negotiate an end to the Bosnian Civil War. The Croats, with U.S. help, used this bombing as a cover to carry out their own massacre and displacement of Serbians from long-settled areas in Krajina. Also Clinton made no effort to push for any on-going UN mobile policing corps, as had been advocated by Canada and others, which could have acted in future international conflicts. Clinton also got the idea he could use violence to get his way in other situations, which turned out disastrously. in Kosovo. .

The Kosovo situation continued to develop into an emerging civil war between Albanians and Serbs, again with secret U.S. CIA help for the Albanian Liberation Movement in Kosovo, Clinton again went in with NATO bombing and the threat of NATO troops, totally by-passing the UN. This intervention led to a geometric increase in the killing of Albanians and Serbs; the bombing of civilians, infrastructure, and industries in Serbia; the nearly total domination of the province of Kosovo by the Albanians; and finally the occupation of Kosovo by NATO troops and the building of the largest technological U.S. base in southwest Kosovo, right where a new oil pipeline of western corporations is projected to be built, bringing Caspian oil to the Adriatic and Western Europe..

The whole situation leading to the destabilization of Yugoslavia was complex and hard to sort through. Yet a strong United Nations with mobile deployment peace-keeping corps of sufficient strength and training; an agreement between all nations that people have a right to the control and use of their own nation's and the world's natural resources on an equitable basis; that mega-corporations not be allowed to exploit and bring military political pressure to bear for their own profits; if these things were so, a scenario such as we watched with horror in the 1990s in Yugoslavia, would be able to be resolved with less destruction

and more justice. The big powers, even the smaller nations, have yet to be willing to permit such a system of international law and order to come into existence.

When the Kosovo war broke out, our UU religious leadership was in great disagreement. President Buehrens defended the NATO action at first, but after it had continued with the bombing of Belgrade, he called for negotiations within the UN framework to bring the fighting to a halt and to replace NATO troops with UN peacekeepers. Dan Berrigan reported that as soon as the NATO intervention occurred, all the encouraging attempts to make peace on the ground in Kosovo between Serbs and Albanians broke down and a much deeper hell broke loose and the majority of casualties resulted. At a meeting of Pacific Southwest District UU Ministers in Phoenix in April 1999, I introduced a resolution along the lines of what President Buehrens had recommended about opening peace negotiations within the UN framework. There was great division among our clergy or perhaps more an unwillingness to confront the issues of war and peace in Kosovo. They voted 20-6 with 2 abstentions to table indefinitely the whole question. This was a disappointing outcome for me, yet given the relentless propaganda of U.S. media regarding the “ethnic cleansing” of Albanians by the Serbs and almost no coverage of CIA support of the Albanian Liberation Movement, which was attacking Serbs and funding itself by running drugs and prostitutes to Italy and Western Europe, it was perhaps predictable.

We know now that the Clinton Administration was growing more concerned about the development of the so-called Al Qaeda movement that was striking out at the U.S. first with the bombing of the underside of the World Trade Center in 1984, then the bombing of U.S. Embassies in Africa causing heavy casualties. Clinton fired a rocket with little effect at the training camps of Osama Bin Laden, the Saudi expatriate in Afghanistan. Clinton’s counter-terrorism expert, Richard Clarke attempted to inform the new W. Bush regime in 2001 of the threat posed by possible “blowback” from the radical Muslims. This Afghan-Pakistani based movement of jihadists identified with Osama, had grown in strength due to U.S. military support during the campaign to counter the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan during the war there in the 80’s.. Now the radical Muslims led by Osama turned their attention toward the U.S., whose support of Israel and setting up of military bases in tyrannical Arab States like Saudi Arabia, the Arab Emirates, and Kuwait, were repugnant to them.

Then came the 9/11 attacks using airplanes as weapons to help bring down the twin towers of the World Trade Center. It was an astounding physical and psychological hit at the solar plexus of the U.S. and its seeming invulnerability. Whether some on the suicide teams had been followed by the U.S. intelligence up to the time of the attack, or the CIA had lost track of them, as the U.S. government claimed, their effect was to anger, frighten and mobilize the U.S. public for a retaliation of some sort..

Several of us from the religious communities in the Los Angeles Basin met immediately after 9/11, for we recognized that a war-like response was most likely from the W. Bush administration. Within a few weeks over 80 different religious communities, Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Unitarian Universalist, Buddhist Humanist, and others were meeting as the Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace (ICUJP) on a weekly basis. We came up with a statement committed to a non violent response to the attack, to change U.S. policies that continue to do injury in the Muslim world, and to begin an educational effort throughout the L.A. area about the prophetic teachings of the great world religions about non violent transformation for justice and peace. From UU groups in the L.A. area, attending were ministers Lee Barker of Pasadena Neighborhood Church,

Judith Meyer from the Santa Monica Church, Tony Vincent from the Sepulveda Society, Ken Brown, District Executive of the Pacific Southwest District and myself from Pasadena Throop Church, later Anne Hines from Canoga Park, Emerson Church would attend. There were also lay leaders from First Unitarian L.A, Neighborhood Church and Throop. active from the start. When Ken Brown attempted to put an article in the UU World about this new organization, he was told by the editor that they only wanted news about the “emotional support” work going on in our churches in the wake of 9/11. When I followed up Ken to share the newsworthy activity for peace within the interfaith community in the “7th largest megalopolis in the world,” I was told by the World’s managing editor that this was not so newsworthy for there were lots of interfaith meetings going on. “Not every Friday at 7 A.M. for months now,” I replied. It did little good as far as getting some news in the World, for over the next two years, there was almost no reporting in our main UU magazine of any peace efforts going on in the UU movement in response to this developing war crisis.

First came a U.S. initiated an Afghan invasion with a NATO “coalition” and other willing nations. Though it was supposedly intended to overthrow the radical Muslim Taliban government for not handing over Osama Bin Laden and was meant to install a democracy, its real effect was to put back into power dubious war-lord leaders of the past, some of whom maintained a Northern Alliance near the Uzbek and Tajik border. They proceeded with mainly U.S. CIA and special operations forces in a brutal fashion to kill off any resisters who stood to fight, many prisoners died in enclosed shipping containers and in the prison situations they were intended to reach. The U.S. empowered cooperative warlords who proceeded to set up a decentralized control structure that relied mainly on the previous economy of opium production, eradicated by the Taliban. In the end, a nominally elected government was set up, led by a former warlord, Hamid Karzai. The Karzai-led government essentially governed mainly in the environs of the capitol city of Kabul and the main Bagram air base where American and NATO “coalition” troops exercised authority.

Our ICUJP interfaith group strongly opposed the Afghanistan invasion, as did others in our UU movement. However some of our ministers supported the NATO invasion of Afghanistan. As of June 2006, Osama bin Laden is reported to be in the Pakistan border area and has not been captured. The U.S. has set up an alliance of convenience with Musharrif, the military leader of Pakistan who ascended to power in an earlier military coup. He has repressed most opposition political groups in Pakistan, a nation that now possess the nuclear bomb and its scientists have shared this technology with other Muslim nations.. We lifted trading restrictions when Musharrif allied with the U.S. for the attack on their former partners, the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Elements in the U.S. government began advocating an invasion of Iraq as soon as 9/11 occurred,. This was so in spite of the fact that there was no connection between the Al Qaeda 9/11 attack and Iraq’s Saddam Hussein. However blueprints for an assault on Iraq had been drawn up even before W. Bush’s administration by so-called “neo-conservatives” of the 20th Century Foundation, These former members of the Reagan-Bush team, Donald Rumsfeld, Richard Cheney Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, Donald Feith and others were all appointed to high positions in the W. Bush Administration.

Even before the Afghan invasion had been finished, suggestions began to be presented for an attack on Iraq. W, Bush brandished such a plan and went to the UN to demand that all their “weapons of mass destruction” be handed over. Many of us realized that the UN weapons inspectors long ago destroyed most, if not all of these chemical, biological, and nuclear capabilities. These weapons largely had been provided by the U.S. during the long

war between Iraq and Iran, in the 80s. However the drumbeat from the Bush people was amplified by the U.S. corporate press and continued for a couple months, despite the report of the reliable head of the UN inspection team, Hans Blix. The hitherto respected Secretary of State, Colin Powell badly compromised himself by going before the UN to present technical intelligence that he later expressed doubts about that maintained that such mass destruction weapon's facilities still existed. Again in spite the UN inspector's reports that they almost certainly had been destroyed by UN teams. Then an estimated 10 million persons demonstrated for peace around the world, the largest such demonstration on a single day ever, brought on by the continual trumpeting of this U.S. threat to attack Iraq. In the end, it made no difference. The US along with the British and small contingents of allies: Australia, a few European conservative governments, Spain and Italy, Japan and some small dependent nations such as Honduras, Colombia, etc. then made an unprovoked attack on Iraq..

As an aggressive unprovoked assault on a sovereign, this assault violated international law: the Charter of the UN, which as an adopted treaty is the U.S. law of the land. It was hugely unpopular with people around the world, in the nations that took part in the attack, and even here in the U.S. After heavy bombardment from the air of "shock and awe," US and British armored divisions rolled in from Kuwait and within a couple weeks, they took Baghdad and Basra in the south, with only modest resistance. Yet here is where the difficulties were just beginning. An Iraqi resistance movement of sizeable proportions, with funding from sources from outside Iraq itself, began slowly to take shape. More than three years later in this 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of the Iraq War, the Iraqi resistance is exacting an enormous toll. In all 2500 US soldiers have officially been reported killed and up to 30,000 have been seriously wounded. Many private construction workers and mercenaries have been killed, along with several dozen journalists, some targeted by the U.S. military. 200,000 and more Iraqi civilians have been killed and a daily civil war has now escalated between Shiite and Sunni Iraqis, The Iraq nation has been devastated. Clean water, electricity, medical care and the entire oil industry, one of the potentially richest in the world, are still not functioning any where near the inadequate pre- 2003 levels, before this last invasion.

Thankfully our Unitarian Universalist movement now has spoken out with some unanimity against this horror show. UU ministers of our Pacific Southwest District took a nearly unanimous stand against the Iraq War in 2004. At the General Assembly in Long Beach in June 2004, a resolution was passed that called for the U.S. occupation to end at the end of the calendar year 2005, in keeping with a UN resolution to that effect, and called as well for the replacing of the U.S. occupation troops with UN authorized policing corps recruited from smaller nations. The UU resolution also calls for the entire Iraqi economy, including the oil industry, to be in the sovereign hands of the Iraqis.

On April 4th, 2005, the UU President William Sinkford, spoke at Riverside Church in New York City supporting the message of Martin Luther King Jr. given by King from that pulpit in 1967, during the Vietnam War. King had called for an end to the "MILITARISM, POVERTY and RACISM" that were driving U.S. policies in the world. As recently as May 2006, a conference of progressive interfaith groups was held at the All Souls Unitarian Church in Washington D.C. bringing together many religious leaders in a coalition to bring about peace and justice. President Bill Sinkford spoke on this occasion and wrote in a letter on our UUA website that our Unitarian Universalist Association has opposed this Iraq war since its beginning, in accordance with our many resolutions opposing war over the past several decades.. On Sunday June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2006, in a national television interview done just before the opening of the General Assembly, President Sinkford upon

being asked where our UU movement stood in terms of the Iraq War, now more than three years old, stated unequivocally that UU's as a denomination were for a withdrawal from Iraq. This was in keeping with the resolution passed at the General Assembly at Long Beach in 2004, calling for an end to the occupation by calendar year 2005 and the replacing of occupation troops by UN policing corps.

Our Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace, with strong participation of Unitarian Universalists in the Los Angeles Basin, is meeting every Friday morning at 7AM since 9/11, to carry forward its action and education program for justice and peace. With the expansion of the warfare state in this growing U.S. Imperium, we have witnessed an eroding of the U.S. Bill of Rights with Patriots Bills, secret surveillance and operations by a vastly expanded intelligence services and secret police. The courts have been bolstered by more repressive judges and justices. We watch in alarm the increased monopolization of mass media by a few large corporations that has already throttled First Amendment, freedom of the press and threatens now to choke commercially, freedom of access to the internet as well. The integrity of the U.S. election process itself is under attack with dubious electronic and challenge practices. Is not the 1900 Republican platform warning, a call for today;

We assert no nation can long endure half republic and half empire and we warn the American people that imperialism abroad will lead quickly and inevitably to despotism at home. We are not willing to surrender our civilization to convert the Republic into an Empire. .

From the Republican Party Platform of 1900

Are we perhaps already past the point of no return, "having already crossed the Rubicon" to a militaristic American Empire as fearfully proposed by Professor Chalmers Johnson in his important book, **Sorrows of Empire**?

#### The Current Situation and What Must Be Done

This is where we stand nakedly in this hour at the start of the Third Millennium:

Whatever our U.S. Government says about a world of law, of its desire to spread democracy, its commitment to the economic well being, health, justice and peace for the citizens in the world, its actions speak loudly to the contrary.

The U.S. government is waging aggressive wars directly and indirectly in the interests of large private mega-corporations. Their purpose, that of the aligned government and the mega-corporations, is to control and utilize the world's natural resources both for profit and for the continuing domination of the world's working population. This is what Imperial efforts have always been about, and this self-proclaimed U.S. Imperium has grown dominant in our world at this time. Only the People's Republic, Russia, some of the former Soviet Union countries and some Islamic nations lie outside its enormous sphere of influence—and even they are in some ways subject to its power.

As a religious movement, we Unitarian Universalists come from an avowed peace and justice tradition, clearly stated throughout our history in conventions of Universalists since 1790 and in the inspirational discourse of our revered forebears: Benjamin Rush, William Ellery Channing, Adin Ballou, Theodore Parker, Henry Thoreau, Margaret Fuller, Julia Ward Howe, John Haynes Holmes, Clarence Skinner and so many others.

Now is the moment we are to be tried and tested, here in this great nation that has become a Frankenstein among nations, gone awry and bezerk. We in the U.S. have a tragic history of warfare, subjugation and racism. Yet our UU forebears rose against these evils and strived to create a nation of liberty and justice for all, where peace would reign in a world community. Now our nation has unparalleled weapons of massive destructiveness and

propose not only to build more, but to use them as our leaders deem fit---to control the world militarily, allowing no equal rival, is our announced intention.

Any truly religious community immersed in the traditions of the great prophets must resist these purposes of Empire with all the energy given to us. Yet we have to renounce the very weapons turned against us---the violence, force, and compulsion that large states have loosed against their own and other people to maintain “law and order.”

“Resist not evil.”--- That is resist not evil in kind, that is with injurious and evil means.

For us Unitarian Universalists to realize our vision of “a world community with peace, liberty and justice for all,” we will have to organize a transcendent unified movement, larger than any interfaith movement so far—made up of Buddhists, Muslims, Christians, Jews, Taoists, Pagans, Native Americans, Unitarian Universalists, Humanists, Atheists, Non-Believers, whatever---larger than any party we have known so far, made up of persons who consider themselves now democrats, republicans, independents, greens, libertarians, labor, socialists, free enterprisers, communists, whatever. Our one abiding concern has to be to shape a nation and world where we all share in this life equitably and fruitfully, pledging ourselves to live together non-violently, working out our differences peacefully. We citizens of the U.S. have much to build upon, the heritage of a Bill of Rights, ideals of equality and justice for all, and a strong prophetic tradition of non violence. This is not a radical hope, but an attainable middle path for which we yearn

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Pasadena, Calif.  
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