

## C O N T E N T S



Paul Buhle

Pg. 5

### Two Global Peace Leaders Pass



Pg. 2

### Innocence and Experience



Murray Polner

Pg. 3

### The wish to find out

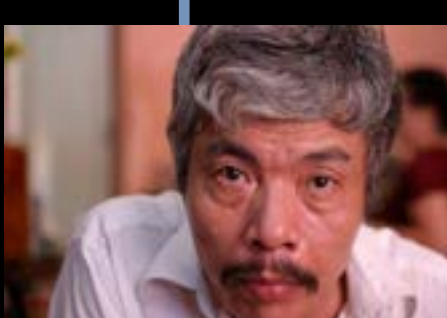
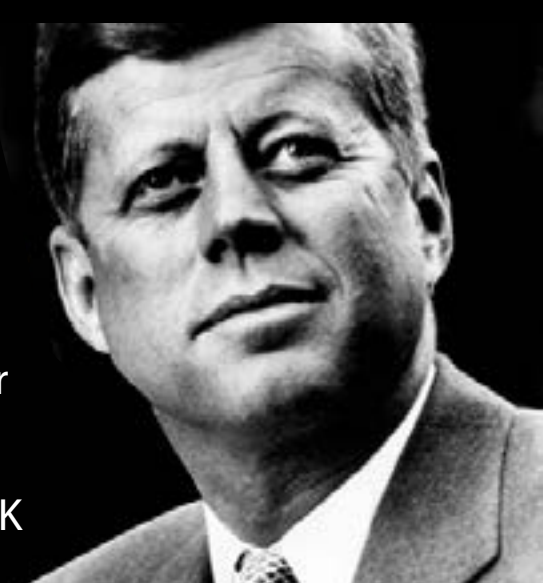


Pg. 4

### We Won't kill

War will exist until that distant day when the conscientious objector enjoys the same reputation and prestige that the warrior does today.

—JFK



### Boah Ninh

Pg. 5

*From Where I sit***Happy 5779**

Stefan Merken

# A Happy and Healthy New Year

STEFAN MERKEN  
*is chair of the Jewish  
Peace Fellowship.*From the Jewish Peace Fellowship  
Editorial Board and Staff

## Obituary

### Jim Munves

Murray Polner

**J**PF's friend and ally Jim Munves recently died in his home in Canada's Prince Edward Island. Jim served as a combat vet in WWII. A dedicated antiwar pacifist and fighter for sanity in our mad, troubled, and distracted world, Jim wrote for *The New Yorker*, *Present Tense*, co-authored *The Kent State Coverup* (Harper & Row, 1980), wrote works of fiction, and introduced me to Dan and Phil Berrigan, after which it made it easier to write their biography. He also founded the Canadian-American book publishing house, Bunim & Bannigan, which happily published *Peace, Justice & Jews: Reclaiming Our Tradition* (2007), which Stefan Merken and I co-edited. Jim will be missed. ☆



Jim Munves

MURRAY POLNER  
*co-edits SHALOM*

## Innocence and Experience

"Few Germans in 1933 could imagine Treblinka or Auschwitz, the mass shootings at Babi Yar or the death marches of the last months of the Second World War. It is hard to blame them for not foreseeing the unthinkable. Yet their innocence failed them, and they were catastrophically wrong about their future. We who come later have one advantage over them: we have their example before us."

—Benjamin Carter Hett, *The Death of Democracy: Hitler's Rise to Power and the Downfall of the Weimar Republic* (Henry Holt & Co., 2018).



*Nazi SS Special Commanders line up Kiev Jews to execute them with guns and push them in to a ditch, already containing bodies of victims, at the edge of the ravine at Babi Yar, Thirty-three thousand (33,000) Jews were murdered in the Babi Yar Massacre on September 29-30, 1941. Hulton Archive / Getty Images*

# SHALOM

Published by the Jewish Peace Fellowship • Box 271 • Nyack, N.Y. 10960 •

(845) 358-4601

**HONORARY PRESIDENT** Rabbi Philip J. Bentley •**CHAIR** Stefan Merken • **VICE PRESIDENT** Rabbi Leonard Beerman z"**EDITORS** Murray Polner & Richard Middleton-Kaplan**CONTRIBUTING EDITORS** Patrick Henry, Susannah Heschel,  
E. James Lieberman, Adam Simms, Lawrence S. Wittner*Established in 1941*E-mail: [jpf@forusa.org](mailto:jpf@forusa.org) • World Wide Web: <http://www.jewishpeacefellowship.org>*Signed articles are the opinions of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the JPF.*

## Independent Thinking

### The Wish to Find Out

Murray Polner

I think blaming the Russians for hacking our 2016 elections may well be legitimate though I still find it hard to believe that Trump “colluded” politically with Russians for any other reason than to make more and more money. As the renowned philosopher Bertrand Russell wisely concluded in 1922 in “Free Thought and Propaganda,” “What we need is not the will to believe, but the wish to find out.”

There are, however, some skeptics.

The Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity, a group of former U.S. intelligence officials who once discredited Colin Powell’s claim at the UN that Saddam had WMDs, have now issued a widely-ignored document dubbed VIPS50, insisting that no one hacked the Democratic Party’s emails in 2016 but they were instead leaks,

perhaps aimed at defeating Bernie Sanders.

Someday historians, declassified documents, and personal testimonies will presumably tell us accurately and truthfully if the authoritarian Putin did indeed lead Russians to hack The Donald and defeat Hawkish Hillary. Or maybe it was Jill Stein and her handful of Greens? Or Rand Paul and his fading libertarians? Or, just an un-American invention organized by our sainted, slave-holding Founding Fathers, which they called the Electoral College?

Still, we should ask if there are honest and independent observers still available to sort out the truth or if everyone has already chosen sides? “We have been attacked. We are at war,” charged the actor Morgan Freeman for the Russophobic and hawkish Committee to Investigate Russia, whose Advisory Board includes Rob Reiner, Max Boot, James Clapper, Michael Hayden, Michael Morell, and Leon Panetta. Meanwhile, John McCain, who is now revered since his death, denounced Rand Paul on the Senate floor, claiming the Kentucky senator “is now working for Vladimir Putin.” In other words, is there a traitor in the Senate?

And maybe another in the White House?

Does this mean that Democrats and liberal independents who rightly detest the beleaguered Trump have become unquestioning protectors of the federal agencies they once loathed—even if the agency’s findings may be a case of inflating Moscow’s astuteness and our supposed defenselessness? My old pal, the onetime blacklisted novelist and screenwriter Clancy Sigal, who authored of one of the literary gems of the McCarthy Era, *Going Away* (1961) (and who, sadly, recently died), observed about Washington’s swarm of well-subsidized propaganda and opinion mills, “J. Edgar Hoover never died, and his paranoid ghost stalks us.”

The first time I wondered about the official party line was on January 3, 2017 when Senator Charles Schumer announced on Rachel Maddow’s TV show that Trump was “being really dumb” for scrapping with anonymous and accusatory intelligence officials—the total number of analysts soon officially reduced to three specially selected unidentified employees—about Russia’s cyber break-ins.

“Let me tell you,” said Schumer, by then head of the Senate Democrats, “you take on the Intelligence Community [and] they have six ways from Sunday at getting back at you.”

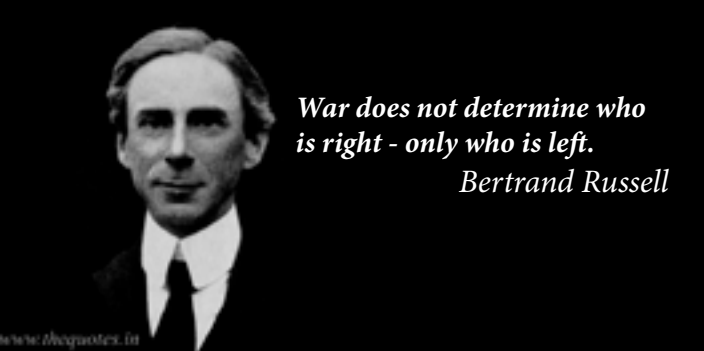
What could the Senator have meant? Whatever he intended to say went largely unexplored by journalists out to get Trump and win some Pulitzers. Schumer’s comments quickly vanished from public sight, never to be heard or seen again.

Where is all this supposed to lead? A new Red Scare against dissidents? A war with nuclear-armed Russia?

Americans need to be reminded again and again that not too long ago 58,000 American soldiers were played for suckers during Vietnam while only 14 members of our hyper-patriotic Congress had kids in Vietnam, none of whom were shipped home in a body bag. Seven thousand (7,000)

have since died in the Iraq and Afghan wars and countless others scarred and maimed forever. Unlike many of us who served in the military, four recent presidents and two vice-presidents have evaded active military duty and no American VIP has ever been held responsible for the misery they’ve

*Continued on next page*

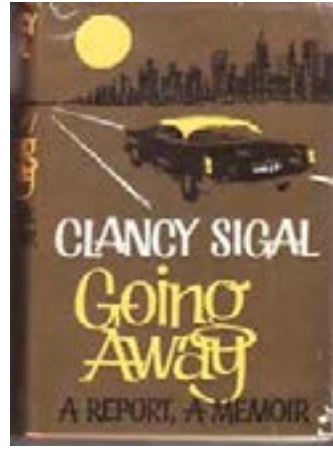


War does not determine who is right - only who is left.

Bertrand Russell

“J. Edgar Hoover never died, and his paranoid ghost stalks us.” —

Clancy Sigal



Senator Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) speaking to the media on January 20, 2018.

Photo credit: Pete Marovich, *The New York Times*.



### Yes! Here is my tax-deductible contribution to the Jewish Peace Fellowship!

\$25 /  \$30 /  \$50 /  \$100 /  \$250

\$500 /  \$1000 /  Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check, payable to “Jewish Peace Fellowship”

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please provide your name and address below so that we may properly credit your contribution.)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

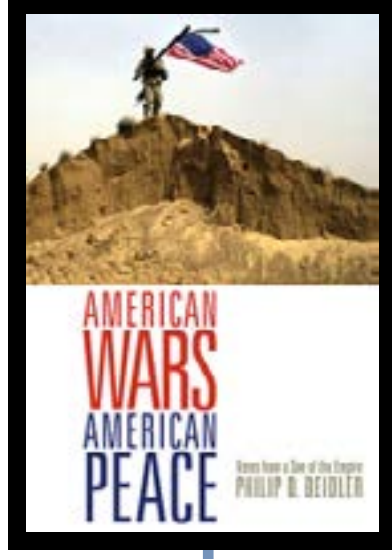
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY / STATE / ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this slip and your contribution to:

Jewish Peace Fellowship ✪ Box 271 ✪ Nyack, NY 10960-0271

Below, please clearly print the names and addresses, including e-mail, of friends you think might be interested in supporting the aims of the Jewish Peace Fellowship.



MURRAY POLNER is SHALOM's co-editor.

Continued from page 3

caused to military and civilians alike.

"I hate every Memorial Day," Philip D. Beidler wrote memorably and painfully in his stirring book *American Wars, American Peace: Notes from a Son of the Empire* (University of Georgia Press, 2000). Beidler survived Vietnam combat as an armored cavalry platoon leader and now teaches English at the University of Alabama.

"No matter which President presides over it. I'm fed up with hearing speeches from people who don't know any better, profaning the memory of people who almost always, since I came home, died scared and alone holding their wounds, or with piss and shit running down their legs, or with chunks of them blown off..."

In addition to recent indictments, tons of headlines, and Cable's "Breaking News," what we have also produced is a massive campaign to convince Americans that Russia's "meddling" in our elections (our mass media rarely notes that the U.S. has always "meddled" in other countries, e.g., Italy, Iran, Iraq, Guatemala, Chile, Russia, Nicaragua, Mexico, Canada, et.al.)

requires ever greater Pentagon budget increases and continued readiness for future wars.

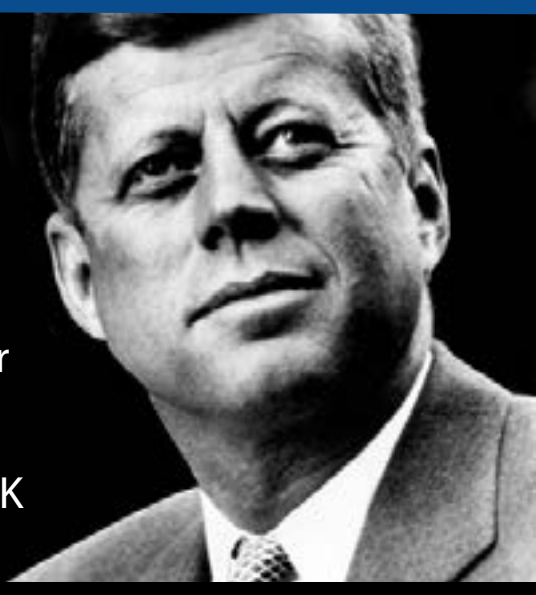
Meanwhile, after America's bogus frenzy about the annexation of Crimea, *The New York Times'* smart conservative Op-ed writer, Ross Douthat, offered some uncommon advice. Referring to Bismarck's wisdom that Europe's 19th Century wars "weren't worth the bones of a Pomeranian Grenadier," Douthat sensibly added: "Even the most bellicose U.S. politicians weren't ready to say that South Ossetia or Simferopol is worth the bones of a single American Marine." What we don't want is another Shoot-the-Archduke incident. So here's Douthat's and my main point: "What we need is realism: to use the power we have, without pretending to powers we lack."

And my final point about Russiagate: It's as far as we dare go in the nuclear age of Donald Trump, American hawks, and Vladimir Putin and his gang. ✧

*no American VIP has ever been held responsible for the misery they've caused.*

War will exist until that distant day when the conscientious objector enjoys the same reputation and prestige that the warrior does today.

—JFK



## We Won't Kill

**So, for the record, here is what conscientious objectors object to:**

We object to killing.

We object to killing in the name of capitalism, we object to killing in the name of Communism, and we object to killing in the name of religion.

We object to being forced to register for war and killing, and we object to being forced to participate in the preparations for war and killing.

We object to killing innocent civilians, and

we object to killing soldiers.

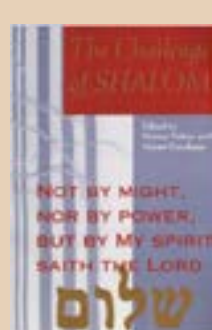
We object to nuclear weapons, and

we object to conventional weapons.

When war comes, many of us will perform peaceful alternative service. Many of us will go to jail rather than compromise deeply held beliefs.

**But we will not fight. We will not kill.**

CHARLES A. MARESCA, JR. was Associate Director of NISB-CO in 1987 (now The Center on Conscience and War).



### *The Challenge of Shalom: The Jewish Tradition of Peace and Justice*

Edited by Murray Polner and Naomi Goodman

Highlights the deep and powerful tradition of Jewish non-violence. With reverence for life, passion for justice, and empathy for suffering, Jews historically have practiced a "uniquely powerful system of ethical peacefulness." *The Challenge of Shalom* includes sections on the Tradition, the Holocaust, Israel, Reverence for all life and Personal Testimonies. **\$18.95 per copy, plus \$5 shipping.**



### *Peace, Justice, and Jews: Reclaiming Our Tradition*

Reclaiming Our Tradition

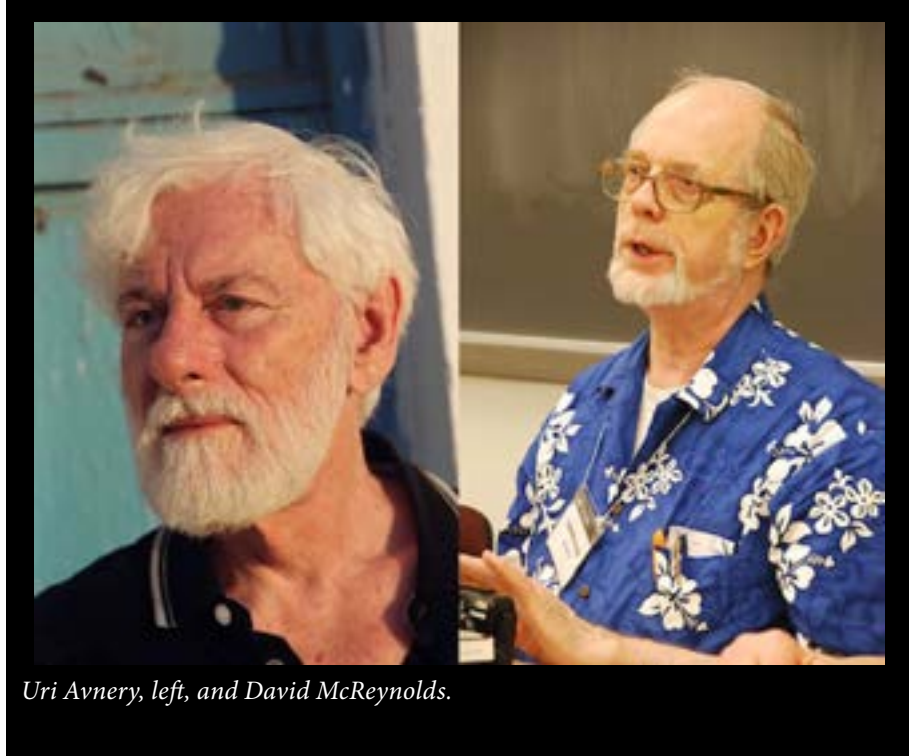
Edited by Murray Polner and Stefan Merken.

A landmark collection of contemporary progressive Jewish thought written by activists from Israel, the US and the UK.

*Publishers Weekly* called it "literate, thought-provoking" and "by no means homogeneous" and which looked at "from all angles, the idea that editors Polner and Merken believe reflect the most basic attitude in our Jewish heritage."

*Publishers Weekly* concluded: "There is much to learn here for anyone, Jew or Gentile, interested in global issues of peace and justice."

\$25.00 per copy, plus \$5.00 for shipping

*Peace Legends***Two Global Peace leaders pass***Uri Avnery and David McReynolds carried on the tradition of the great Eugene V. Debs*

Uri Avnery, left, and David McReynolds.

Paul Buhle

**W**ithin just a few days, 94-year-old Uri Avnery and 88-year-old David McReynolds died. I am not sure they ever met, although they had toiled so long, led or took part in so many peace movements with the same species of war hawk enemies, the two can be seen as twin souls in the struggles against the worst tendencies of our time.

Readers interested in the details of their backgrounds, where they lived, who they partnered with romantically, and so on, can find this information easily enough on the web.

**Avnery**, born in Europe, found himself in the Irgun military in the founding war of Israel, and regretted the acts that the new Israelis committed against Palestinian civilians all the rest of his long life. A confirmed leftist in a country that excluded a fifth of its population from real citizenship and moved steadily toward the Right from at least 1967 onward, he could not succeed.

But he did not fail. He published views despised by the mainstream politicians of all parties (leaving aside the “Arab” parties and the descendant party to the Communists), he met secretly with Arab counterparts, including Arafat, and near the end of his life, posted commentary several times per week.

His mini-essays were lucid and widely read, perhaps most of all by the young people of the Israeli Resistance. After he died, West Bank settlers plotted to destroy his ashes before they could be buried—perhaps the greatest tribute of all.

**McReynolds** was as deeply American as Avnery was Israeli (a designation which, he insisted, belonged as much to non-Jewish inhabitants of the state). In an unpublished essay, he related how he became a sort of Beat or pre-hippie kind of radical, gay within a resurgent, 1950s pacifist movement led often enough by Catholic Worker activists.

McReynolds was also a socialist, part of the little group of Socialist Party members who survived the Cold War and experienced a blip of popular-

ity, at least in a few cities, during the dark 1950s. An aging Norman Thomas and a young Michael Harrington found themselves, at the socialist helm in the early 1960s, encouraged by the Civil Rights and peace movements, but also invaded by a rancorous crew of former Trotskyists moving swiftly rightward.

A staff member and effective leader of the War Resisters League, McReynolds naturally allied himself with the group around *Liberation* magazine, early and militantly against the U.S. invasion of Vietnam. Very much like Uri Avnery watching former liberal-socialist allies become ruthless land-grabbers in the West Bank, McReynolds saw the liberals and some prominent socialists rabidly eager to see the Vietnamese resistance destroyed by every brutal means available.

Indeed, within a few years, the land-grabbers and rightward turning socialists of America became intimate global partners—the moving figures of neoliberalism and neoconservatism—with Avnery and McReynolds resisting every step of the way. Perhaps the most bitter pill to swallow was the eagerness of the Israeli Labor Party and the leadership of the AFL-CIO to join in the bloody fun.

McReynolds chose to stay in the small and insular Socialist Party, running for offices (including the president) in order to publicize his point of view. Avnery, who had been in the Knesset but quit to do more good outside, would have sympathized.

To the end of their lives they remained real public figures, resolute in their views. Notably, they both insisted that the familiar combination of domestic reforms and hard-line foreign policies was no more than a monstrous fraud.

It can be no surprise that prominent Israeli intellectuals, tipping their hat to a leading dissident, sneer at the young people who faithfully follow his vision. Most likely, vaguely social democratic American liberals who favor a “forward” foreign policy (said to be the Clinton doctrine) of overthrowing unfriendly regimes through a combination of money, words, and bombs, will offer McReynolds their own versions of backhanded tributes.

Let us remember Uri Avery and David McReynolds as the uncompromised champions of peace that they were in life. Speaking for myself, I see Eugene V. Debs in them, and that is the highest tribute that I can make. ✨

*David McReynolds was as deeply American as Uri Avnery was Israeli.*

**PAUL BUHLE** is a left historian, popular cultural critic, and radical comics publisher, and a former senior lecturer at Brown University. He was active in the civil rights movement and worked with SDS in the Sixties. He was founding editor of the influential journal, *Radical America* (1967-1999) and his *Radical America Komiks*, produced in collaboration with underground comic pioneer Gilbert Shelton of Austin, helped introduce the radical new medium to the American Left.

This essay originally appeared in *The Rag Blog* on August 25, 2018.

*To the end of their lives they remained real public figures, resolute in their views.*

# Innocence and Experience

“Victory after victory, withdrawal after withdrawal. The path of war seemed endless, desperate and leading nowhere.”



Boa Ninh

—Bao Ninh, *The Sorrow of War: A Novel of North Vietnam* (1991; English translation 1993 by Phan Thanh Hao, published by Martin Secker and Warburg Ltd.). Bao Ninh served with North Vietnam’s Glorious 27th Youth Brigade. Of the 500 who went to war in 1969, he is one of ten who survived.