

December 12, 1989

Dear Friends,

The world is changing rapidly - and wonderfully - but some things remain. On the fifth floor of Judd Hall, we continue the elusive search for the motivational mechanism of offense in rats. On the first floor, the Evolution of Social Behavior continues its tradition of literature searches and papers - now concentrating on our "reproductive postponement" theory of mental illness. And, in the basement, perhaps most important of all, the students in Psychology of War and Peace take their place in the swelling, worldwide peace movement.

More and more I see the proper role of teacher as indistinguishable from that of my comrades who are community organizers and labor organizers. The task is to organize our courses so that students themselves become activists for whom truth is something to be sought through collective struggle, a struggle to be carried from one generation to another like a sacred torch.

In the lab we have been working for four or five years now to understand how and why ventromedial tegmental brain lesions abolish fighting (offense) behavior in the rat. Every set of results seems more paradoxical than the last. Kaleb Yohay, the TA (teaching apprentice) led the class last spring in placing small bilateral lesions in the same location where larger lesions have been shown to leave the biting attack and abolish only the offensive sideways posture. Paradoxically, the small lesions abolished all offense. Trying to understand the paradox, Kaleb and I re-tooled the laboratory and embarked on a program of chemical stimulation on the theory that we might be dealing with a network of mutually inhibitory neural networks. Initial results were disappointing, but the work continues. As many of you have learned from your own experience, the frontiers of science are always full of surprises!

In the Evolution of Social Behavior, all of the students combined forces this year to investigate how mental illness might be the human manifestation of the general phenomenon of reproductive postponement in response to social stress. Topics covered included: hormonal response to bereavement; hormonal effects in schizophrenia; sports amenorrhea; social stress amenorrhea; thyroid hormones in mental illness; ACTH-corticosteroid relations; primate migration; and rodent reproductive postponement that is mediated by pheromones. I hope that with one more year of such good works it may be possible for our class to publish a book on the subject.

In the Psychology of War and Peace, we had the most successful year yet. In the spring class, TA's Kevin Greiner and Kim Buxenbaum led a group that set up this fall's project on US/USSR relations. TA's Eric Dusansky and Mike Ostrowski made the bridge to the fall team and organized the first ever joint US/USSR student summit. It was so successful that I have attached the results in this mailing. Twenty five Soviets and even more US students gathered for a weekend and hammered out a joint declaration to chart the path toward a future world of cooperation and peace. I think you will agree that it is an inspired document, and I hope you will help us get it publicity wherever you are.

The other group in Psychology of War and Peace took on the task of solidarity with the people of South Africa and Namibia. As background, you may recall that they had raised money for the ANC Freedom School in the fall of 1987. The leaders in that class then became the leaders of the Divest Now campaign in the spring of 1988 which forced the University finally, after years of procrastination, to divest most of their stocks that support the Apartheid government. This spring we were fortunate to have a highly conscious South African student, Vusi Nhlapho, as a teaching apprentice, along with Tanya Greene, who had taken part in the Divest Now campaign. And this fall, two of their proteges, Erie Stiles and Rhonda McLean, took up the torch and led the group in solidarity work. In the spring over a thousand dollars were raised, and in the fall, even more was raised to send to the election campaign which has transformed Namibia from an oppressed colony of South Africa to the newest free nation.

As an indication of the new mood on campus, over a dozen students have asked to sign up for a group tutorial on Psychology and History to bridge the semester and prepare the TA's for next fall's Psychology of War and Peace course. Thank you, Comrade Gorbachev, for the new mood! By the way, one of the readings for the course, and one that I recommend to you all is his book on Perestroika (Harper and Row paperback, 1988).

I am looking forward to work on another book, *The Abolition of War*. I see the two earlier books, *Psychology for Peace Activists*, and *The American Peace Movements*, as preambles to this most important work of all. Its task is to assess the forces for peace, the forces against peace, and the prospects for the abolition of war in our time. The approach must include the history of the war/peace dialectic, including the dual purposes of militarism, war abroad and suppression at home. Now, buoyed by the INF treaty, settlements of many regional wars, and the remarkable unprecedented non-violent revolutions of Eastern Europe which were free (for the first time in history) from military intervention, I feel inspired to write such a work.

The Seville Statement continues to be used around the world to clear away the pessimistic view that war is biologically innate, and to make it possible to build the new vision of a peaceful world. I represented the Statement at a world peace conference sponsored by UNESCO in the Ivory Coast last summer - the first such conference on the continent of Africa. If you are unaware of it, the reason is because the Western press boycotted the conference just as they had done the UN Special Session for Disarmament in 1988 and the UN Special Session on Disarmament and Development in 1987. (In other countries they call this censorship!). As a result of the Ivory Coast conference, we expect that the Seville Statement on Violence will be incorporated into the program and budget of UNESCO, thereby becoming an official part of the United Nations.

Although the Peoples Peace Appeal is now a thing of the past, the networks that it established survive and prosper. In New Haven, the committee for the Appeal was transformed and enlarged into an official City Peace Commission, as a part of the city government. I worked with the Commission this year to put a ballot referendum before the voters in the November election: "Shall cuts be made in the United States Military Budget in order to provide more Federal Tax Dollars to New Haven and other cities for affordable housing, transportation, drug-abuse prevention and treatment, quality education, job training, health care, child care, and programs for elderly and disabled people, and should the government guarantee conversion from military to civilian production without loss of jobs or income?" The referendum passed by 83%. Now we are trying to get communities and states around the country to set up such Commissions and vote on such referendums in next year's elections. They are Congressional elections -by forcing each candidate to take a stand on the referendum, we could elect a "Peace Congress" in 1990!

I enjoy hearing from all of you and would like to keep in touch. And please continue to stop by at Wesleyan whenever you are in the area!

Peace, David .