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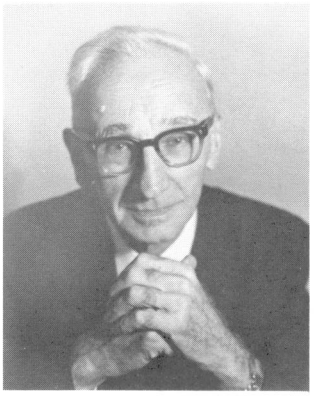

An outstanding alumnus, *Rev. A. J. Muste*, died in New York City on February 11. A memorial Chapel service for Dr. Muste was held on February 22. A much publicized pacifist, Dr. Muste had very recently conferred with Ho Chi Minh in Hanoi. We are printing here most of the obituary from the New York Times. In tribute to his memory we are also presenting a short review of *The Essays of A. J. Muste* a publication that came off the press a very few months before Mr. Muste's death. *Reprinted from the New York Times, February 13, 1967:*

Mr. Muste was one of three clerygmen who had what they described as a "very frank, very cordial" two-hour talk in Hanoi with President Ho Chi Minh of North Vietnam just a few weeks ago.

In a half century of pacifist work, Mr. Muste had protested in Moscow's Red Square against nuclear testing, at the United Nations against the arms race, on the White House lawn against the war in Vietnam and in Times Square against air-raid drills.

Expelled From Saigon

Mr. Muste's vigorous opposition to the war in Vietnam resulted in his speaking, marching and protesting repeatedly against the fightning in the last few years. He was expelled from South Vietnam for demonstrating against the war during a visit to Saigon last April.

Last month Mr. Muste visited North Vietnam with Rabbi Emeritus Abraham L. Feinberg of the Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto and the Right Rev. Abrose Reeves, former Anglican Bishop of Johannesburg, South Africa. They said in Hanoi that the North Vietnamese had "an iron determination to fight for their independence."

Reinhold Niebuhr of Union Theological Seminary once described Mr. Muste as a perfect innocent and others characterized him as an American Gandhi.

Mr. Muste had a number of disappointments, including his son's desire to enlist at the age of 17 in the Navy during World War II. It was characteristic of Mr. Muste that he signed the enlistment papers without recriminations.

In 1940, Mr. Muste rose at a Quaker meeting and said, "If I can't love Hitler, I can't love at all." His ardently pacifist statement won him no friends among foes of fascism, but winning friends was not his goal.

"Peaceableness does not mean trying to disburb nothing or glossing over realities," he once observed. "Nonviolence is not apathy or cowardice or passivity."

Two incidents in the young manhood of the Rev. Abraham John Muste reflected the life-long principles of pacifism and industrial democracy he stubbornly espoused.

Resigned as Pastor

He first came to public notice in April, 1918, when he resigned as pastor of the Central Congregational Church in Newton, Mass., because of his declared opposition to World War I. He said that wars could be avoided and were not in the spirit of Christ.

Apparently less rigid in theological doctrine, he served variously with Dutch Reformed, Congregational, Friends Meeting and Presbyterian groups. In his last church affiliation he was director (1937-40) of the old Presbyterian Labor Temple here.

He was one of the leaders of the strike in the Paterson (N. J.) silk mills in 1931, when he was jailed again, this time for unlawful assembly—picketing.

Dedicated to the proposition that war is an inevitable outgrowth of capitalism, he was a militant pacifist. He insisted that "war does not bring peace, it merely breeds more war."

In 1940 he became executive secretary of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, an inter-faith pacifist organization. He led many "poster day" walks in protests against the observance of Army Day. In 1958 he was national chairman of the Walk for Peace to Washington, in an appeal for the unconditional halt to nuclear weapons tests.

In July, 1959, he was arrested after he attempted to enter a missile construction area at Mead, Neb., an Atlas missile-launching facility. He pleaded guilty to charges of trespassing. His group, Omaha Action, was dedicated to passive resistance.

He announced in 1948 that he would refuse to pay Federal income taxes because they were used to finance armament. The United States Tax Court has yet to rule on the matter.

Mr. Muste was born in Zierikzee, the Netherlands, Jan. 8, 1885. *He received his B.A. degree at Hope College in 1905 and his M.A. in 1909.* He spent the intervening years doing graduate work at New York University and Columbia.

He attended New Brunswick Theological Seminary and received a Bachelor of Divinity degree at Union Theological Seminary in 1913.

Mr. Muste challenged Communist doctrine in the nineteen-thirties and was on various occasions labeled a Trotskyite. He contended that nations might unite against the Soviet Union but were incapable of eliminating economic warfare against each other.

In 1950 he called for "immediate and unconditional abandonment of a policy to stop Russia." He became a leader in a national Church Peace Mission and of the War Resisters League. He became chairman in 1957 of the New American Forum for Socialist Education, which he said aimed to advance free discussion among all elements related to historic socialist and labor traditions.

Surviving are a daughter, Mrs. John H. Baker of Thornwood, N. Y.; a son, John of Columbus, Ohio; a brother, Cornelius '14, Ormond Beach, Fla. (a daughter Constance Hamilton '41 died in 1966); three sisters and eight gradchildren. His wife, the former Anna Huizenga, died in 1954.

Review of *The Essays of A. J. Muste*, edited by Nat Hentoff. New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1967.

by D. IVAN DYKSTRA, Ph.D.

This is an unusual volume. This is partly because it is about an unusual man. It is partly also because it can convincingly clothe with respect and dignity the kind of person who, in our culture, has not typically elicited respect nor appeared dignified.

This portrayal of A. J. Muste is worked at in three ways. A very brief introduction collects an impressive list of commendatory judgments by people more or less close to him. True, such lists do not prove much; but then they also do not simply say nothing at all. Then there is an autobiographical section of considerable length. Actually this makes an autobiography out of telling how one has failed in the attempt to write an autobiography and what might go into one if one ever got to be written. It is a pity that these autobiographical notes do not carry us beyond the thirties. But they do give something of the happy glow of A. J. The rest is a collection of occasional essays by Muste. But "occasional" cannot mean that they are essays about many different things. Muste was a single-minded devotee. But he manages to remain an interesting devotee. Most of the essays are from his "peace-years," after his ventures into the labor movement. These twenty-five years saw A. J. hammering at his great first love, the dream of peace, but then peace not simply as an absence of war but peace as a way of life. Hope alumni will be pleased to note that his valedictory address of 1905 is also included. This contains some premonition of A. J.'s future: "Character is built by action rather than by thought"; and "in action is the principle of all progress on the part of the race and the ultimate warrant of peace to the individual."

People who knew A. J. will hesitate to try to catch him in a page—or in a volume. But some clear impressions do emerge. They are the impressions of an individual, but this individual happens to have been, more than any other person, the focal point of the peace movement in the past 25 years. The impressions of the person thus easily become transmuted into living principles for a movement—not a peace movement narrowly conceived, but the peace movement as the central ingredient for a new ennobling and humanizing way of life. The movement is not one with which majorities avow agreement. But when men disagree they do, not so much, I judge, because the movement is bad as because it just might be an oversimplified dream—and if the dream *is* bad it is only because the appeal of it might distract us from what seem to be the "safer and surer" avenues toward wherever it is that we are going.

Among the impressions, most of all, there is Muste's authenticity. He spoke and thought and acted out of the deepest and most spontaneous commitments of his own life. These are hardly the commitments of his social and religious traditions. But church bells which, for most of that tradition, could ring as authentically for war as for peace, have a way of being simplified for Muste into being nothing more than the messengers of peace.

There are heavy overtones of something that begins to grip men in our times from other sources, notably Sartrian, without the Sartrian machinery of thought. To Sartre the truth about man—and his nobility—is his freedom and his freedom is his "being responsible." Muste sees this. "Wherever evil happens I must take its burden on myself, and wherever good can be brought forth I must make myself responsible."

Muste's relation to Christianity also becomes clear through his essays. He is ruthless in his criticism of a Christianity that counsels escape from the responsibilities of providing people with "a better place to live" by insisting on the inwardness of redemption. But conversely, he is dubious of the possibility of long maintaining a significant personal pacifist stance without a personal religious faith. To Muste love is the heart of the Christian faith; but love is more than sentiment. It is translated into the simple precept: "injustice is not necessary for doing anything worth while." But Muste is also convinced that the alternatives to a Christian oriented pacifism are always self-defeating because the roads lead back invariably to some kind of exercise of violence.

Muste is hailed as a clear-headed and perceptive social analyst. But this, too, holds no mystery. However Muste got that way, his social analysis is simply motivated. For one thing he sees everything in terms of what it does to people. But also, he is perceptive in his understanding of the dynamics of society, and sees that these are tainted with forever powerful impulses to power and oppression. So his is the hard search for an alternative that will not be so tainted.

Finally, there is his soberness toward the future. His perceptions about what is going on now prevent him from ever being simply optimistic about where we are headed. So his pacifism is not a starry-eyed other-worldly kind of certainty. Doom lies ahead of us, literally. And his anxious question is who can be the trustees of the remnants after the holocaust. Civilization appears as if it is being forced by its own demonic forces into receivership. But who can receive it? Muste begins with the intuition that this will be only for those who have been purer in heart than the world around them—those who by every honest vision and intent kept their own spirits free from the malaise of violence that brings civilizations down. There is no glee in A. J. over the prospect that his kind of peacemaker might just, in this unexpected way, become the inheritor of the earth. What does carry him back into a calm dignity is the sense of thrill in knowing that, if pieces are going to need to be picked up, there will be some spirits that will be able to pick them up and build again, and better now.