

Newsweek

February 7, 1944: p. 80

RELIGION

Behind Peace Now

To win the war is the surest way to lose the peace . . . We should fight if we are attacked, but Pearl Harbor doesn't count: we goaded the Japs into it . . . This is an unjust war, entered into by the "have" nations to preserve their ill-gotten gains . . . A negotiated peace could be brought about within a week if the President of the United States got on the radio and called in representatives of all nations for an international, two-way Fireside Chat.

On the word of its leaders, any resemblance between these basic beliefs of the Peace Now Movement and those expressed by pro-Fascist propagandists is coincidental. But by last week the coincidence had become striking enough to make a vocal section of the press look with continued suspicion upon Peace Now as a movement undermining the war effort. The Dies committee, in turn, put the movement on its list of organizations to be investigated. And the Japanese radio, oddly enough, agreed. It said Peace Now was "no freak organization" and "the fact the government is called upon to suppress the movement suggests it is making steady progress."

Background for Inquiry: Peace Now, founded on July 11, 1943, by a small group of pacifists gathered in Whittier Hall, a Philadelphia Quaker hotel, had grown from an organization with an especial appeal to conscientious objectors into a catch-all for anyone who was against this war for any reason. Obviously many crackpots were included among the 3,000 members it claimed throughout the nation. But what worried many supporters of the United Nations' unconditional-surrender pledge was that Peace Now was making room for people whose words really carried weight. It claimed to have enlisted some already: it was trying for others with familiar isolationist or ex-isolationist names. How well it would succeed was problematical.

Yet one secret of Peace Now's all-inclusive appeal lay in the broad, indefinite philosophies underlying its one-plank program of a negotiated peace. This had been drawn up chiefly by its two wheel-horses: Dr. George W. Hartmann, the organization's chairman, who is 40 years old, weighs 200 pounds, and is professor of psychology at Harvard University; and Miss Bessie Simon, \$100-a-month executive secretary who runs the tiny headquarters of the movement in New York City. Some examples of what they were preaching:

OldMagazineArticles.com

Peace Now



Ladies in favor of a negotiated peace heard a quintet vocalize on the subject at Carnegie Hall . . .

- Peace Now is not isolationist in the Chinese Wall sense but is against “armed military intervention.” It is positively not anti-Semitic and welcomes all comers.

- There is precedent in American history for a negotiated peace: All our conflicts except the Civil War and the last war were settled in that way. Hence it would be possible for the world’s leaders to sit around a peace table right now. If one leader were not liked by any of the others, he could be replaced. For example, Toyohiko Kagawa, a Christian and leader of Japan’s cooperative movement, might be an alternative to Tojo.

- One-third of the people want a negotiated peace—a claim based on a poll taken last August by 36 interviewers over the country. The question was more than a little in the have-you-stopped-beating-your-wife category: “Which would you support, war to the bitter end, or an attempt to save lives and treasure by negotiation?”

- Pearl Harbor resulted from an “ultimatum” sent the Japs on Nov. 27, 1941, by President Roosevelt. That means the United States and Great Britain have a few motes in their own eyes—and that the Germans and the Japanese are not iniquitous by nature.

Peace Now seemingly had misgivings about almost no one. For example, Miss Simon told *NEWSWEEK* that when *The New York Post* published Peace Now correspondence referring to a possible ex-member of the German-American Bund—letters which she said were stolen from the files—she telephoned Dr. Hartmann and asked: “George, what is a Bundist?” The Harvard professor replied: “I don’t know, but it’s some kind of a club. Bund means club.”



. . . and pinned their hopes on Hartmann

OldMagazineArticles.com