



ETHICAL CULTURE

M O N T H L Y

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MARCH 2003

Leader's Message

DEAR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS,

It is the beginning of February as I write this letter. By the time you read it, we will either be at war or at peace or, as we are now, balanced between the two. The



last option is much less likely in view of Bush's tight schedule governed by his need to commence and complete the invasion of Iraq during the winter months. His timing is also most probably governed by the reluctance to wait until next autumn or next winter, when

he would be facing reelection. War is always a horror, whether justified or unjustified. But the prospect that we could be at war without the explicit sanction of the UN Security Council is tragic. By violating the most fundamental principles of international law and by defying the very institution which we worked so hard to create (UN), we would be undermining the very principles we say we are fighting for: peaceful relations between nations governed by international law and legal process rather than the alternative state of nature in which the

strong take what they wish and the weak suffer what they must.

I am no friend of Iraq's despotic ruler and would love to see him dethroned and his people liberated. Yet not at the cost of supporting international anarchy. It is not that I think law must be rigidly obeyed under all conditions. Civil disobedience by nations can be sanctioned under certain conditions when fundamental moral issues are at stake and when no other alternative is even remotely possible. Yet now is no such crisis and I see no such justification.

And so in the coming weeks as we approach the precipice, some will pray for peace, some will fight for it and some may do both. I do not pray but I do hope and I will struggle for it.

In these difficult times I have been reading the life and works of Gandhi, an extraordinary person who fought for peace and justice without violence and whose courageous struggle to prevent war between Hindu and Moslem cost him his life. This will be the topic of my Platform Address on Sunday March 2, 2003. Till then, peace be with you and with us all.

—Boe

Over a century ago, the Philippines were an object of U.S. interest. "*The First Fruits of Imperialism*" was a lecture given March 12, 1899 by Felix Adler before the Society for Ethical Culture, NY. In a published excerpt, Adler said

"We cannot rule or own a nation. As a democratic government where every man is equal in rights to his neighbor, we cannot own the Philippines without committing political suicide. To stand by the principles of our great democratic Republic which have ever been our distinctive excellence, in this time of national temptation, will be our crowning glory, and by so adhering to those principles we

will then more surely do good to the civilized and uncivilized nations of the world."

FELIX ADLER (1851-1933) was a vice president of the Anti-Imperialist League (1899) and the Anti-Imperialist League of New York (1900-04), and a member of the executive committees of the Philippine Independence Committee (1904) and the Filipino Progress Association (1905-07). He was later a member of the Advisory Committee of the Haiti-Santo Domingo Independence Society (1921). The Society for Ethical

Culture, which Adler founded in 1876, played an influential role in the anti-imperialist movement. Its leaders in New York (Adler), Chicago (William M. Salter), and Philadelphia (S. Burns Weston) were all officers of their local Anti-Imperialist League branches, and they frequently used their Ethical Culture forums to voice their opposition to imperialism.

Citation: Adler, Felix. "The White Man's Burden Is Sentimentalism." Excerpt from New York Times (March 13, 1899). <http://www.boondocksnet.com/ai/aitexts/adler990312.html> In Jim Zwick, ed., *Anti-Imperialism in the United States, 1898-1935*. <http://www.boondocksnet.com>

Ethical Culture Society of Essex County



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EDITOR'S NOTE

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THE NEWSLETTER INVITES YOU to submit articles, announcements, commentary, etc. for publication. **Items must be received by the first of the month for inclusion in the following month's edition.** Items should be no more than 150 words, preferably submitted via e-mail to the editor but can also be delivered to the office, att: Editor, Ethical Society Newsletter, 516 Prospect St., Maplewood, NJ 07040. Please call the office, 973-763-1905, and leave word especially if your item is time-sensitive. Editor reserves right to edit for length, clarity and content. Opinions offered in this publication are those of the authors.

For those interested in receiving their copy of Ethical Culture Monthly by First Class Mail for a charge of \$10/year or \$5/half year (beginning in January), call the office, 973-763-1905, and request our First Class Mail Special.

Ethical Culture Society
of Essex County,
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Visit our web site:
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A Gift from the Platform Committee

Our platforms are usually engaging, but a particular gift was brought to our congregation at the January 12 platform which featured almost a dozen teenagers from Columbia High School discussing their "Facing Race" club. The young people shared their concerns and new approaches to dealing with inherent prejudices toward people of color and of mixed race, many represented in the club population. The young people were articulate, inspiring, hopeful, supportive of one another and still attracting new friends to the club. The club has now grown to over 100 participants. Faculty advisors are Columbia High School teachers Roberto Reyes (former teacher and director of our Sunday School) and Sara Mastellone.

Young people and the Platform Committee: you give hope to all of us, with your vision, your hopefulness and your inspiration.

—Betty Levin

ALERT—

Watch for upcoming "Platform Poll" in May — an opportunity to express your preferences for the types and contents of Sunday morning platforms. More information to follow in April and May newsletters.

Interested in Participating on A Collaborative Panel Platform?

Contact SUE WILLIS or ALICE ROBINSON-GILMAN if you would like to be a member on one of the collaborative panels coming up in May and June this year. Topics to be decided upon later.

This is a good opportunity to be part of a Sunday platform with low stress involved. You only speak for a portion of the platform and participants assist each other in deciding what each person would like to say.

In addition, if you have any ideas for a topic that would suit this format (whether you want to participate or not), please contact Sue or Alice.

FUND RAISING COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES SOCIAL EVENTS

• **TRIVIAL PURSUITS PARTY 7:30 p.m., Fri., Mar. 28,** at the home of JEANINE ROSH. Donation \$12. Fun and games, snacks and dessert. *(10 guests)*

• **SPAGHETTI by JIM WHITE.** The pasta and puns will be *al dente*. Sometime in March or April. *(10 guests)*

• **POETRY READING & DESSERT 8 p.m., Sat., Apr. 26** at the home of SYLVIA KRAMER. Donation \$12. *(10 guests)*

• **PALATE PLEASING GOODIES** You are in for a treat. Many members are offering their own special homemade items for your eating pleasure. We have breads, muffins, lasagnas, soups, sauces, desserts and more. Don't miss out, sign up ASAP.

• **CHICKEN BARBECUE 5 p.m., Sat., June 7** at the home of ESTHER BARCUN. Donation \$15. *(10 guests)*

• **GOURMET LUNCH BY THE LAKE 12 to 6 p.m., Sat., July 26** (rain date Sun., July 27) at the home of BOE MEYERSON. Donation \$20, minors free. Besides the lunch, there will be *hors d'oeuvres*, wine, beer, soft drinks and snacks all day. Swimming, boating and rafting are available. *(30-35 guests)*

Sign-up sheets and lists are available at the society or call NANCY BOHN, JEANINE ROSH or JILL FOX for reservations. This is your opportunity to help the Society meet its financial obligations and you'll have fun, too.

White Elephant Sale Sat., May 17

It's not too early to start bringing your items to the society, so they can be sorted and ticketed.

Poetry at the Ethical Society

Mon., Mar. 17 at 7:30 p.m.

Featured reader and open readings.
Every third Monday of the month.

Something New Online!

Have you been looking for a place to discuss ethical issues? Try our new *Discussion Place*. Go to the website at <http://www.essexethical.org> and click on "Discussion Board." It will take you to a bulletin board where different people are posting their opinions. After you've read them—add yours! The present discussion is about Iraq, but other topics are welcome.

Social Action Committee Joins Essex County Anti-war Coalition

Our Social Action Committee has voted to join organizations like the Black Telephone Workers for Justice, New Jersey Peace Action, Students for Peace and Justice-Rutgers, Veterans For Peace, and Vietnam Veterans Against the War in the Essex County Coalition for Peace and Justice (ECCPJ), a broad coalition of individuals and organizations throughout Essex County, New Jersey, who are involved in the struggle for preservation of peace and promotion of social justice. The Coalition believes that the United States, as a member of the United Nations and the world community, should conduct its foreign policy on the basis of international law, the United Nations Charter, and respect for other nations' national and political sovereignty. As the most powerful nation in the world, the United

PLATFORMS, *continued from page 4*

ethics Project. He is also actively involved in Union affairs, including managing the local's financial assets. He is the author of *The New Introduction to Economics*.

MARCH 30 • JUDY GRAEFF: SUSTAINING PEACE THROUGH NATION BUILDING—A UNICEF PERSPECTIVE Dr. Judy Graeff has worked in international public health for nearly 20 years: in child survival at the Academy for Educational Development, a nonprofit international development firm in Washington, DC, and in maternal and child health at Columbia University, School of Public Health. She co-authored the book, *Communi-*

States and its government should be an example of peaceful and equitable cooperation among nations, and a strong opponent of the use of force, be it military or otherwise, in international affairs. Based on principles, the ECCPJ strongly opposes the Bush administration's plan for a unilateral and preemptive military strike against Iraq, and calls upon the US administration to refrain from the use of military force and adopt a diplomatic and peaceful solution, within the framework of the United Nations, to the problem of weapons of mass destruction.

Book Club at the Society

More exciting book discussion—on Sun., Mar. 9, at 1 p.m. we'll meet again to discuss Books 4, 5 and 6 of Milton's *Paradise Lost*. MIRA STILLMAN will lead the discussion. Though Milton's great poem is in

nication for Health and Behavior Change: A Developing Country Perspective, published by Jossey-Bass in 1993. During her career, she has lived in Morocco and Ivory Coast, and has worked for shorter periods in Senegal, Lesotho, DR Congo, Afghanistan and Maharashtra, India. She recently joined UNICEF and works in the childhood immunization program.

Dr. Graeff obtained her Ph.D. in behavioral psychology from SUNY at Stony Brook and a Masters in Public Health from The Johns Hopkins University. She joined the Ethical Culture Society of Essex County in 2002 and lives in Morristown with her husband and two children.

glorious verse, it reads like a novel. Don't be afraid to try it, you will be amply rewarded. Please join us.

Ethical Culture Chorus

Join us singing *in harmony* under the masterful, engaging and enjoyable leadership of JEANINE ROSH.

With a repertoire of traditional folk, show tunes and fetching, inspirational songs on many topics, the chorus will be rehearsing weekly, 7–9 p.m. Thurs. evenings at the Society.

TRIBUTES

Congratulations and good luck to MARY BABIARZ and JOE GLUCK in their new home in Maplewood. Congratulations to LISA NOVEMSKY on the birth of her second grandson, Milo. He is the son of her daughter, Rebeka and son-in-law Tom Obrzut. Milo joins first son, Liam, in the family.

ETHICAL CULTURE SOCIETY OF ESSEX COUNTY

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SUNDAY MORNING PLATFORMS

Platforms begin 11 a.m. All are welcome. Platforms are subject to change without notice. Sunday School 11 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

MARCH 2 • Boe Meyerson:

Gandhi: The Peaceful Warrior

MARCH 9 • Jim White:

An Hour with Jim White

MARCH 16 • Calvin Chatlos

Human Faith Project: Insights and Speculations

MARCH 23 • Brian de Uriarte on

Corporate Riches, Corporate Greed, and Corporate Poverty

MARCH 30 • Judy Graeff:

Sustaining Peace Through Nation Building: A UNICEF Perspective

Philosophy at Essex

9:30–10:30 a.m., 2nd & 4th Sundays, the Philosophy Group meets to engage in philosophical discussion. We explore the ideas of historically important ethical philosophical theories, analyze current events and personal issues from a philosophical perspective, and simply enjoy the play art of philosophical dialogue. Whatever the subject, we have a good time arguing, exploring, probing and having adventures in the world of philosophical ideas. Boe Meyerson facilitates the discussions. Join us. Admission is free and there are no “pre-requisite” courses.

MARCH 2 • BOE MEYERSON—GANDHI: THE PEACEFUL WARRIOR An exploration of an ethical hero who fought against violence and injustice. Boe Meyerson is our leader and the Humanist Chaplain at Columbia University.

MARCH 9 • JIM WHITE: AN HOUR WITH JIM WHITE Jim White is Leader Emeritus of the Ethical Culture Society of Essex County. By profession he is the principal attorney for Mental Hygiene Legal Services representing psychiatric patients in New York State and a community activist in Harlem and with the Coalition Against the Violence Initiative.

MARCH 16 • CALVIN CHATLOS: HUMAN FAITH PROJECT—INSIGHTS AND SPECULATIONS about faith, the relationship to worth and dignity, spirituality, creativity, mysticism, grace, evil and even speculations about scientific and evolutionary significance will be discussed.

Dr. Chatlos is a psychiatrist and Director of Pediatric-Consultation Services at UMDNJ Robert Wood Johnson Hospital in New Jersey. He is a graduate of the first class of the Humanist Institute and was mentor of its ninth class. He started the Human Faith Project in 1995 with members of the Ethical Culture

Society of Essex County to empower the transformation to an “ethical culture.”

Special Music by the Stirling Duo!

MARCH 23 • BRIAN DE URIARTE ON CORPORATE RICHES, CORPORATE GREED, AND CORPORATE POVERTY Brian de Uriarte, who holds a Master of Arts in Economics from Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, is an instructor and Assistant Professor of Economics at Middlesex County College. He teaches economics and philosophy and has developed curriculum. He has also served on the Business Division Council and participated in the

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