

P.C. International News Update - MARCH / APRIL 1990

USSR - First Peace Child Conference! Over 200 students from Belgorad, Gomel (near Chernobyl), Kazan, Kalinin, Krasnodar, Moscow, Odessa, Riga, Vladimir, Volgograd, Vilnius, Yaroslav; performances presented by several of the groups, including a moving show from Gomel about the young victims of Chernobyl radiation. Video-tapes of last summer's shows were screened. Congratulations to Sasha Stokolov, Steve Riffkin, Karina Chepoy, Julia and all who made it possible. Great work!

Vladimir Posner led a lively discussion on nationality issues, much of which was spent discussing religion. At conference end, Soviet PC director, Stokolov, said: "Kids and adults here are fed up with events like this that are pre-arranged and pre-fabricated from above, from Moscow. This Peace Child conference was organized for them, by them - that's why there is so much commitment to Peace Child here." Julia Klimova, director and producer of the first Russian Peace Child, added: "This was really the first time I felt the Peace Child spirit - I saw it in the eyes of the children. We have given them a sense that they can do something - that Peace Child is a vehicle over which they have some control. It's a very important moment now: we must do every thing possible to allow them to realise their dream, for if we stop, or go back to organizing everything from the top in Moscow, we shall betray the great hopes that they all have for Peace Child."

Stokolov told me that a production in Vilnius, Lithuania, was definitely planned, probably in the Fall, but an Azerbaijani/Armenian show was out of the question now. "There is a war there. Teachers and parents strenuously prevent their children from meeting each other under any conditions."

It was touching to see how many kids mentioned Peace Child itself as part of the solution to the world problems in their outline script ideas. "The world hits a big crisis but, after a million Peace Child productions, all is well..." or "Peace Child kids escape into a forest to learn primeval life styles. They return to teach the world to live at peace with nature and the grass starts to grow again, and the planet prospers..." Soviet kids' imaginations were running wild with the potential of the Peace Child process, ideas tumbling out in rich profusion. Peace Child has much work to do in the USSR to become a loud-speaker for these ideas.

USA: Masses of activity to report - much of it connected to Earth Day, which was a huge media event here. Sue Berkmeier, following a successful production in Northern Virginia suburb, Herndon, took her troupe to perform on the Mall on E. Day. New City at Peace progressing well for April premieres. Olympia Washington mounting "Earth Child" for Earth Day; (Olympia now registered as a full chapter under the effective direction of Bob & Mary Wharton) Summer programs in Virginia/N. Carolina, Chicago, Boston, Newport OR and Fargo ND all proceeding smoothly. (Thanks, John Marks of Fargo, for interviewing our China applicants for Noordwijk while he was in Beijing!) All places filled for summer 1990 tours with an excellent reserve list. New Study Guide committed for fall as the old one is now definitely out of date. March National Council and Board meetings focussed on fund-raising and communications issues, and especially on the opportunity we have with veteran Washington fund-raiser and long-time Peace Child friend, Karen Mulhauser, now hired as our new fund-raising consultant. Also, Sally Riddle, (mother of Rachel, Intl. Tour '88) hired as new office manager. **Family Trip** - was great!! I took my son, Alexander, and we had the best time in Moscow, Kiev and Leningrad with a multi-talented family group. The Soviet Union is a wonderful tourist destination - especially with Peace Child people! Sign up now for the Family trip 1991!

England: London date confirmed at Shaw Theatre, August 3rd & 4th with youth from more than 20 nations. Excellent launch meeting held at London University's Institute for Education where Tom Daffern is now a tireless partner in the project. Great poster: "Peace Child - a musical for the earth!"

Canada: March Newsletter from Toronto tells of big dinner set for April 27th to raise funds for 15-cast to go to Volgograd. Toronto now sistered with Volgograd after long campaign. Ottawa: Gala performance set for July 11-13 as part of Natl. Conference for Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution. Casting April.

Japan: Mika Fuji's production set for August 4-5 in Hiroshima; kids confirmed from Australia, Denmark, Korea, The Philippines, USA, USSR, and a new cast of 22 youth from Japan. New Pacific rim script is being worked up by Mitsui, and Craig Lindvahl (music director) has just completed a new song for this show.

Holland: Just got the great poster for "D'rop of d'ronder" to be sent to the 1150 schools who have bought the script; reply cards will reveal how many are actually doing the show in June/July - the "Musical Season" in Dutch schools. **Arnhem:** Theatre confirmed for 3 shows, Oct. 21/22. Also, we have received under-writing from the Johan Matser property development company!! So - official invitations now going out to children in Arnhem's sister cities in East Germany and UK, and to our contacts in Poland and USSR for this program scheduled 29/9- 23/10/90.

Ireland: Wonderful, moving letter from Jenny Reese whose Kinsale Peace Children are doing the "Greening of Kinsale" on Earth Day, removing all the environmentally un-friendly products from the markets for at least that day. This in addition to rehearsing her excellent One-act Peace Child show which is now also being done in Cork. Jenny is starting a new project, Daughters of the Earth. She writes: "It hit me vividly, at a visceral level that our planet is in a state of emergency - that my grandchildren would not live out a normal life span, that skin cancer would be a given and I was calmly taking band-aids out of a box. I can't tell you how deeply this shook me or how clear I became that mothers and grandmothers need to do something very big

very fast. So I am organizing a women's network all over the world. Of course, this all evolved from my experience with Peace Child last summer..." (NOTE: Copies of the Irish Video on NTSC(US-standard) VHS tapes will be available, price \$40 from May 10th 1990. Contact the US office (703) 385 4494.]

Israel: April saw the first mini-conference of Peace Child workshop leaders at the Adler Institute: Yael Drouyanoff plans to hold these meetings quarterly, and publish a bulletin on the results. Her problem is money: "With \$50,000 I could open five more important workshops tomorrow!" Sad note - "Peace Child in Nazareth" cancelled - again the money did not come through. 5 workshops proceed excellently and the new Yad Harif Creative Arts Centre based on a kibbutz near Jerusalem has offered to host 1991 tour.

Australia/New Zealand: warm letter from Julie Howard. Her group is sending two kids to Mika's program in Japan. She describes how Australian kids feel cut off from the rest of the world: things like Peace Child can help them to feel connected which is why we are pushing hard for Australian TV to participate in UN PDC. Got great applications for Noordwijk from two new contacts: Australian Peace Resource Center, (Martin Peake) and Australian Children's Foundation(Steve Barry). Thanks also to Anthony & Gita Brooke whose contacts in New Zealand provided some excellent kids for England program.

UNOY/India: green application forms for the UNOY assembly at Nainital, India are printed and winging their way round the world. Administrator, Ria Kooijman now in India making final plans with "Unifier" Ameeta Mehra on details of conference. Indian Prime Minister, V P Singh, slated to attend closing ceremony and presentation, August 28th. Ameeta is now producing bi-weekly newsletter on UNOY Assembly.

Belgium: Brussels City at Peace program (bringing together Arab immigrant children with Europeans) advances well sponsored by "Presence et Action Culturelle" with Marwan Zoueni as director and co-writer.

"Happy Earth Day everyone!!" April 22nd. What a superb piece of International Networking this has been! It focussed the minds of Peace Child people everywhere on the primacy of the environmental issue and inspired a major new version of our play, "Earth Child"(more than 100 shipped to date!) Thank you Mark Dubois and Teresa McGlashan for your inspirational leadership of the International Networking for Earth Day!

International Peace Child Conference, Moscow, April 1991?? OK? Dates, costs, agendas currently under discussion. If you have any thoughts on this, write me. There will be a planning meeting set for the weekend of November 10/11, 1990. Location to be decided.

Noordwijk meeting: 15 Nobel laureates confirmed, almost 500 applications now received from 53 countries; congratulations to Rosey Simonds for great outreach effort. Amsterdam Council for the World's Children now has a co-sponsor: UNICEF(Netherlands). **UNPDC:** Good meetings with US Board, Robin Ludwig, UNEP & with Coke marketing people on this. All agree that this year, we would be wise to work at grassroots level to develop educational materials / prepare the ground for a second big show in 1991.

YFU: I had good meetings with Dick Willard & Bill Woessner in Washington discussing Arts for Understanding project. We are talking seriously about having Peace Child handle their arts program.

Jean Sauve Youth Foundation: Good meeting with new Director General, Michel Bedard: like UNOY, this Foundation plans meetings of talented youth to discuss policy and tactics for future world leaders. The difference is that Sauve, former Governor General of Canada, has a \$10m endowment from governments! 1st Meeting planned for 1991. Target group: 18-25 year olds - perfect for PC alums to further their ideas.

SCRIPTS?? Peace Child is building a library of different scripts. Currently, the following scripts are available in some form:(Outline treatment, line script, or published)

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| - Study Guide(US-Soviet/nuclear) | - City at Peace (Drugs, violence & Inner city issues) |
| - Earth Child (environment) | - Summer Tour script (US-Soviet/environment) |
| - Peace Child Hamburg(city env.) | - Les Etrangers (Brussels/immigrants/Inner City) |
| - Drop of Dronder(Holland- env.) | - Peace Child Ireland (environment + ETs.) |
| - Peace Child Japan(Pacific Rim) | - The Bridge(Europe East to West, North to South) |

Eastern Europe: I am visiting Berlin, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary & East Germany in May; see next update for news.

South Africa: Two kids selected for England program - the first South African Peace Children!

Costa Rica: good applicants for Noordwijk - thanks!

Germany: Peace Child Hamburg Group rehearsing valiantly with help of pop singer, Taco.

China: PRC kids set to come to Fargo for Imagine prog. June-August, and to Noordwijk program.

Sweden: A big thank you to Hans Levander and the Lifelink network based in Uppsala which provided some of our best applicants for the Noordwijk conference;

Earth Concert International(Canada): also thanks for good applicants especially from Chile.

Next Update: June 19th; Please write to reach me by June 12th deadline;

Write: Peace Child, Postbus 772, 1200 AT HILVERSUM, The Netherlands.

P.C. International News Update - JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1990

"EARTH CHILD": Just spent two weeks in the USA and written a completely new version of "Earth Child". This time I think you're going to like it. It is a simple 45-minute play based on the 2-village idea of the Peace Child Middle East story with the environment - the Voice of Nature - becoming the central character in the story. Included are a couple of great improvisation exercises which dictate much of the content of the play. It is designed to be done on Earth Day - Sunday April 22nd! Get hold of a copy, let me know what you think.

USA: "City at Peace" performances set in DC for April 28/29 & May 5/6; Dallas just received a \$38,000 grant to mount C.A.P. in the Spring. Los Angeles has a CAP weekend Festival coming up in June, the result of creative networking between Peace Child Rep and the LA Chapter. Summer programs shaping up well with our good friend, Gerry Wright, preparing an intriguing new program in Boston; Charlotte NC winning much praise as they prepare to be a tour city on the Roanoke tour, but sadly Richmond can't get it together this year. Preparations going well in Newport Oregon under the leadership of Nancy Larsen and Kathy Larrabee. All in that 5,000 strong community know of the summer tour. Chicago tour consolidating with a big announcement event on Feb. 3rd. Carlo just completed his whirlwind tour of 22 audition spots seeing over 300 kids. "Some great new kids this year," he reports. Great Newsletters from Rochester, LA Rep, and York Chapters. Thanks!

USSR: Preparations hotting up for the first Peace Child conference in March; summer programs set and staffed. Sasha Stokolov, head of new Moscow group, in Washington in Feb. for meetings with us and YFU. Family Trip confirmed to Moscow (for conference), Kiev & Leningrad. Entire US Tour staff will attend conference! We got a proposal from a new group planning to use redundant military machinery for "Paratroops of Joy" tour: anybody know anything about this?? Sounds pregnant with potential!

COSTA RICA: Amelia Barquero still dreams of becoming headquarters for PC Latin America. Her chorus did a concert of PC songs for a meeting of Bishops after which the Bishops of Tegucigalpa & Chinondaga (Nicaragua) invited them to visit. Invitation from "Ninos Por la Paz" in the Dominican Republic is still standing. As always, finance for travel is the problem. We must find ways to support PC in Central America

CANADA: Great newsletter from Toronto Chapter. Plans going well for summer Volgograd visit. Also a small chapter developing in Ottawa.

JAPAN: Mika's International program for summer 1990 moves forward with masterful efficiency. Met with Hirohisa Ohta in New York: he is looking to find sponsors for a national tour (1991) of Peace Child in an orchestral version, and for sponsors for Japanese participation in UN Peace Day Concerts 1990/1991.

postponed

ISRAEL: David Gordon is currently in Israel working with Bernard Rouhard and Riad Nasser to firm up the schedule for this summer's tour. A welcome number of US kids put Israel as their first choice. French kids are confirmed; confirmation expected soon on Irish, Dutch, German and Soviets. Final decisions February 15th.

CHINA/USA/USSR: Trollwood Academy in Fargo, North Dakota are patiently advancing their massive, 3-year "IMAGINE" program. This summer's stage is to bring 10 Soviet, 10 Chinese and 10 US kids to Fargo to create & perform the new play; next year, it will be toured through all 3 countries.

UNPDC: Good meeting with PBS. If project goes ahead as planned, they will distribute program nationwide in US. I have had encouraging meetings with sponsors - decisions due March 31st. Priority in the US this year is to develop educational materials and hold "Peace Day Discussions" with local/state officials to build solid grassroots support for future Peace Day programs. Noordwijk, Holland: we are working on a fascinating new initiative for UN PDC here in Holland. It is a meeting between Youth and Nobel Prize winners in June to discuss the priorities for the future: PC will create a new show to incorporate the "manifesto" that emerges. We have been asked to search the Peace Child network to find good kids. We'll be in touch!

UNOY: The dates for the Youth Assembly have been changed to August 18-28 in Nainital, India. Maarten Klejne, a major sponsor-seeker for UNPDC, has been appointed interim chairperson of UNOY. I talked with UN officials about official status for a UN of Youth: there is an office for youth in Vienna that I am contacting. Lots of history of UN Youth initiatives (UN Youth Year etc.) - none of it very encouraging. Watch for news.

ENGLAND: The date for the London show still not firmly tied down by Jan. 31st deadline. Steve Elliott is inspiringly confident that the West End theatre date will come through which, knowing Peace Child miracles, it probably will. Meanwhile, trees are being planted, excitement is mounting in Taunton. Peace Pledge Union has pledged support and volunteers to arrange London show.

IRELAND: A Peace Child Repertory Theatre has been formed in Kinsdale under direction of Jenny Reese!! She has written a 30-minute environmental show based on ideas of '89 Irish Tour. Also a PC Rep forming in Carrag NaBhfear under the direction of Mary Bollard. One alum of '89 tour earnestly raising money to go to USSR; 2 confirmed for England show, and we are hopeful that some alum will be able to go to Boston tour;

HOLLAND: "D'rop of d'ronder" is published. Have just seen the whole package. It is amazing!! The worksheets and teacher handbooks are excellent!! But - they are all in Dutch. Rosey is working on the translation. D'rop of d'ronder materials are now available world wide. Arnhem show tentatively scheduled October 28/29; it plans to involve Arnhem Youth Symphony + kids from USSR, Poland, Germany & Holland. PS. Woolcombes are house-hunting! House in USA up for sale! Can this move be permanent??

BELGIUM: Fascinating developments: Marwan Zoueinl, a Lebanese director/choreographer/composer is working with me to develop a project between immigrant Muslim/Arab and Walloon(French-speaking) youth. Central Problem: how does a Muslim girl decide at age 12 whether to take the veil and thus separate herself from her western friends) - or not, thus cutting herself off from the centuries-old cultural tradition of her family? No easy answers here. This is a new style of "City at Peace" project which will find applications in many European cities where there are similar problems. The group in Rixensart is advancing entertainingly their new play for 8-12 year olds. Based on the Peace Book Story-teller situation, it has vignettes created by the kids on environmental situations.

WEST GERMANY: "Peace Child Hamburg" is complete. The group is seeking an adult to coordinate the production in time for Earth Day. A Group in Bielefeld is also working on it. Both are organizing auditions for tours. Phil Marriott, Family Trip '88 turned up in Hamburg working with the same group on a great new song called "The Message" which they sing in 14 different languages. .

BERLIN: Made our first visit to Berlin. Extraordinary place - travelling between East and West is like moving from Manhattan to Moscow in a single subway stop! We gathered hunks of the wall! And we visited Doug Bishop, theatre director at the American School. He was enthusiastic. We are hopeful that his school will be host to the first International PC Project in Berlin.

From here, it seems unification is inevitable. But many West Berliners are not happy about it. What can they do?? Easterners are pouring in at a rate of 2,000 a day! The only way to solve the housing problems, and the complete collapse of East Germany's economy is union. Otherwise, it is a serious case of "Would the last one out of East Germany please turn out the light"

POLAND: Met with Waldek Saniewski & Mariosz Marinowski(Peace Child Poland '88) and Professor Janowski of the Polish Ministry of Education to discuss possible "Democracy" play for internal use in Poland. Problems: they don't want any more tub-thumping propaganda concerts for Peace. It reminds them of Komsomol! A very different kind of Peace Child play needed. Approval gained for a pilot project in a school.

Poland was truly depressing. Marinowski reckoned no kid would be seen dead doing a play called "Peace Child"! No kid cares what might be happening in 2025 - to get food on the table next week is the priority. To be optimistic about the future is to be a fool; to think positively is to be naive. Cynicism and anarchy are the appropriate attitudes of the moment. Massive unemployment threatens; shortages are likely to continue for decades; pollution is ghastly - life expectancy is falling; crime is rising. The great amnesty of political prisoners let out hundreds of petty criminals. Heavy chains and powerful anti-theft devices are fixed to all cars, and people taking dogs for walks hang on to them tightly: kids have been known to grab them and cook them - their only way to get meat! A new approach and a new play is needed to stimulate hope here. I am confident that we can do something: Rock music is one of few things not discredited in the young minds.

Eastern Europe: I am developing a new proposal to do 7 TV documentaries about young people in Poland, East Germany, Hungary, Romania, Latvia & Czechoslovakia doing a new play imagining their future in their country. The 7th program would bring kids from each to a joint international project in the West imagining the future of Europe. We shall thus create new PC plays for each E. Europe country, in their language. I am seeking TV funding for this: EEC money, and funds from individual governments is proving impossible to get.

Question: What kind of play should we be doing in the USSR and USA this summer??? The nuclear issue has been overtaken by the environmental issue but stronger is the question of what kind of Europe do we want?? How do democracy, nationalism, and socialist ideals fit together?? Should we explore Mr Gorbachev's idea of a "Common European House" that includes North America?? Should we deal with Third World issues?? I shall be listening carefully to the delegates to the conference in Moscow, but I would love to hear from you: how would you answer the question posed above?

Next Update: April 12th '90! Write: Peace Child, Postbus 772, 1200 AT HILVERSUM, The Netherlands.