

PEACE CHILD'S PROGRESS...

Vol. 2, No. 2

June 1985

"PEACE CHILD" is a musical fantasy which tells how children bring peace to the world. The Peace Child Foundation has been set up to promote that fantasy and play a part in preparing people for it to become a reality.



Teens on Stage parade the flags of every nation on earth during "I want to live II"

"Peace Child" Breaks Out Around The World

Jamaica, France, Switzerland, England, Canada, the Soviet Union!!—over the last four months, the Peace Child message has been heard in these six countries. We now have invitations to perform the show in West and East Germany, and in Bergen, Norway.

"We were treated like stars," says Tony Booker, the musical director of the Peace Child troupe that attended the JAMFEST in Kingston, Jamaica in April. "It got so that people would come up to us on the street and say, 'Are you with 'Peace Child?! - that's great!' By the end of the week, we were getting applause just for walking up on stage. We had a wonderful time."

The Teens On Stage group from Columbia, Maryland organised the first European tour of "PEACE CHILD" which included a performance at the American Church in Geneva. Members of the US and Soviet delegations to the Arms Control talks were invited. Some US delegates attended, and were apparently impressed. The Columbia group also performed at their sister city, Cergy-Pontoise near Paris, France, and at the beautiful St. James Church in London, England. Full reports on these and other productions are included inside.



Natasha Rose Woolcombe

Welcome, Natasha, to the expanding Peace Child family!! — May you, and Mikhail Gorbachov, herald a new era of peace, confidence and co-operation between the peoples of the Soviet Union and the United States, and all the people of our world.

Santa Barbara: Ripples of activity are gathering toward a major "PEACE CHILD" spectacular in April 1986 in the President's home town. David Woolcombe and Steve Riffkin have been approached to produce the show. Major funding and Los Angeles talent are being sought for what may be the biggest "PEACE CHILD" ever. If you want to get involved, call the Peace Resource Center: (805) 965-8583.

Video Pen Pals: Several groups around the country have been working on modernizing the old 'pen pal' idea by sending video letters to the Soviet Union and other countries. The idea is to start a dialogue using video images of each other's families, every day lives and so on. Paula de Cosse and the Youth Link network are at the hub of this activity: (612) 922-4032, 4835 Penn Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55409.

Snippets . . .

Peace Child Video: after sifting through about 27 hours of video material on "PEACE CHILD" productions around the country, we have assembled a new video called "Introducing Peace Child." It is designed to arouse community interest—and funds—for local productions. It contains material from Kennedy Center and Royal Albert Hall productions, from the Teens Onstage show that went to Europe, newsclips from other productions, interviews and a commentary.

Peace Play Register: In Britain, the Writer's Union has compiled a Register of plays about peace—350 of them!! Although a lot of the plays deal with British subjects (the Falklands war etc.)—it is fascinating to see just how many good authors have written plays on the issue. The editor notes at the end "a lack of plays dismantling Cold War attitudes about Russians as 'enemies,' and plays which show realistically how peace can be achieved." 'Peace Child' clearly fills a gap! Copies available from Peace Child office, price \$3.50 (incl. postage).

Minnesota

The Second Peace Child Festival will be held on October 4th, 5th, & 6th 1985. The Festival will be held in the Peavey Plaza in Downtown Minneapolis. All the groups which participated last year have expressed interest in doing so again, and many new groups are coming forward.

Casey Stengel is planning a dance event based on the drawings of some Lebanese children; the Festival committee is commissioning a new play on the theme of peace to be premiered at the Festival; there will be a second Peace Assembly, and on Friday, a new concept of peace workshops or 'Peace-shops' for children and adults.

Full time staff members Donna Seline and Gerry Allen have been putting out the message with a program called "Peace Child on the Move." Seminars and study sessions have been held in several schools and communities around the state urging, specifically, creative participation in the Peace Child Festival.

Karen Regelman, Katya in the '84 Festival performance, has been active on the lecture circuit speaking on children's responsibility to work for peace.

Plans for the U.N. Year of Peace—1986

World Tour and Film . . .

On September 17th this year in London's Royal Albert Hall, the British Peace Child Foundation is arranging a concert to draw attention to the UN Year of Peace. For the concert Playbill, the Foundation is asking distinguished politicians, academics, entertainers, philosophers to answer the question: **"What would you like to see happen in the Year of Peace?"**

We asked Peace Child Foundation President to give us his answer.

I am inspired by the concept of the Year of Peace. Unlike the other years created by the U.N., it is not designed to draw attention to a particular sector of the human population—the disabled, the children, the aged—this Year of Peace is for all of us.

I would like to see leaders from every facet of human society rise to the challenge: I would like to see political, religious and philosophical leaders make peace their priority for the year—or perhaps not 'peace' so much, as goodwill toward each other, the pursuit of constructive dialogue. Peace is only a by-product of positive co-operation and friendship.

Peace also requires an adjustment in our value systems and those of societies: an adjustment that recognizes the supremacy of selflessness, compassion and integrity—one which would give priority to talks about famine relief over talks about arms control; one that would seek first discussions about areas of potential co-operation, rather than create stand-offs in areas where vital interests are presumed to conflict.

The Year of Peace creates an opportunity for a thundering affirmation of the seeds of goodness in all people—to reveal the love, the desire for unity and peace that lies within us all. And here I think "PEACE CHILD" has a role to play. You have read in this newsletter how the music and message have touched the hearts of people in several different countries already. In 1986, I want to see "PEACE CHILD" spread into every nation on the planet with this message of hope: I see it as a powerful, emotive symbol of the possibility for co-operation.

This summer we travel to the Soviet Union to create a version of the Peace Child story which accurately reflects both Soviet and American perspectives of the peace issue, and reaches a mutually acceptable resolution. Miracles like this can happen in the world of musical comedy if not in politics! The achievement of this version (which we have been working toward for two years), is rich in symbolism and educational possibility. The new Study Guide will be a uniquely valuable teaching tool for examining US and Soviet attitudes to peace-related issues. Therefore we want to issue a challenge to schools and communities the world over to "Do Peace Child as your contribution to the Year of Peace!"

In order to make our challenge heard, we plan a world tour in the summer of '86. We will create a young, high quality, Soviet-American musical theatre company about 30-strong—and tour them through 15-20 major capital cities of the world. In each city, we will assemble and pre-rehearse a chorus of 1,000 children who will join in the songs and participate in some of the action. In each city, we will seek out a major star who will act as Story-teller, narrating the story in the native language. In this way, one would gain the maximum local involvement, plus the unique media interest of Soviet and American children touring a message of peace *together*—a living symbol of the possibility of detente.

We plan to create the climax of the tour at the United Nations in September. A performance will be arranged in the General Assembly chamber which will be linked by satellite back to the choruses of children in each of the cities we have visited. So at the climax of the show, there will be a global chorus of children



Peace Child President, David Woolcombe

singing around the world of their wish for peace—linked in a patchwork of multi-screen images, and seen in homes, and bars, and parlours throughout the world.

On my last trip to the Soviet Union, I was given a letter from Sovin Film, the Soviet film production organization, confirming their wish to make a co-production of a film of "PEACE CHILD." The world tour would be the climatic scene for this film—the children's great march around the world conceived as a theatrical tour! Other parts of the film will be shot in studios in Moscow and the US to make a high quality cinema feature. Stars would be invited to make cameo appearances, so that the film would be studded with popular figures to give it mass appeal—like the "We are the World" record.

Peace Child sound recordings, videos, T-shirts, games and so on will be marshalled to promote the challenge of the Study Guide, and raise funds for an endowment for the Peace Child Foundation so that we may genuinely bring the Peace Child story to life: have thousands of young Americans and young Russians changing places every year—getting to know each other, each other's language, each other's culture . . .

The realm of fantasy? — I don't believe so. I have the strongest hunch that the Peace Child fantasy can become a living reality. I believe that love and a desire for unity does lie at the core of every being on this planet. In most of us it is shrouded beneath layers of knowledge and anxiety, desire for power and perceived success; but something like "PEACE CHILD" can penetrate those layers and touch people at an instinctual level. Its innocent appeal can awaken moral consciousness and remind people of the core of goodness in them. They need to be reminded.

My aspirations for "PEACE CHILD" in the year of peace are extravagant, sensational—but they are very possible. I hope that others, governments particularly, will rise to the challenge of the Year of Peace with equally extravagant, gradiose plans for drawing attention to their commitment to the most crucial priority for our planet. I hope that the non-governmental organizations will plan powerful events—that the First Earth Run, the Olympics of Co-operation, the Peace Walks, the conferences, rallies, telethons and all the other festivals and events planned for the year will be fully achieved with an energy and zest that extends on beyond the Year itself.

Ultimately, governments must take the lead, and stunts like our world tour and film can only serve our purpose well if governments follow-through and support the cultural/educational programs we propose. The crowning achievement for me in the UN Year of Peace would be to have the world tour that I propose funded by both the US and Soviet governments.

France, England, Switzerland . . .

Betty May's TEENS ONSTAGE company first performed their version of "PEACE CHILD" in December 1984. By January, the decision was made to take the company and perform the show at their sister city in France, Cergy-Pontoise. The troupe would link up with the local youth orchestra and perform the show together. By March, the project had grown to include performances in Paris, London, and Geneva Switzerland where the US/USSR arms control talks had just begun. \$80,000 had been raised from parents, foundations, rotaries, and a variety of sources that only the ingenuity of 37 teen-agers, and Betty May, could find.

These are some extracts from a letter Betty wrote to parents describing the trip:

Our arrival in France was slightly problematical as none of the reception committee spoke English, and our French was not as good as we thought it was. We got by, and things got better the next day when we had our first rehearsal with the conservatory orchestra. It was love at first sight: the chemistry between the orchestra kids and the TEENS ONSTAGE was magic, and for most of us, the very best part of the trip. As the week progressed, they even began to play along with our warm-ups, and sometimes their enthusiastic playing was so loud (they were a 40-piece orchestra!) — our kids were drowned out, but everyone was having such a good time it didn't matter.

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The kids carried it off beautifully. We found that, rather than give standing ovations, the French demand encores. They clap their hands, stamp their feet and yell "Ha! Ha! Ha!" — faster and faster until the performers return to the stage. It took us a while to figure out why they were stamping their feet and yelling "Ha!" — perhaps they didn't like us? We did three encores that night, and never less than two at the other performances.

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London greeted us with a delicious meal of fruit, drinks and sandwiches lovingly prepared by the Peace Child Foundation people. They were wonderful, caring people and made us feel like international stars. The performance that first night in St. James's Church was beautiful, and it was a special treat to meet David Gordon, the composer of "PEACE CHILD." He is an absolutely delightful person, as gentle and as wonderful as his music.

Following the performance, we were taken to our host families. Just as in France, the families did everything they could to make us feel at home



Soviet and American kids begin the dialogue

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After this performance, some of us had a whirlwind tour of London — and I mean whirlwind! Our bus driver, John, was one of the most wonderful people I have ever met. He was determined to have us see as much as possible in the time we had so we roared through St. Paul's Cathedral, Buckingham Palace, the Tower of London. . . . John took us all under his wing, buying us juice and cookies after the performance, finding some honey and lemon at midnight for sore throats: he was a London attraction unto himself!

The final performance was particularly exciting because there were twenty kids from the Soviet Embassy school present. After the performance, we had a party with these kids. It was a beautiful sight to see clumps of American and Russian kids gathered all over the room eagerly asking each other questions and getting to know each other. Kids are kids in French, English or Russian.

Looking back, I feel some regret that the kids had not seen more of the tourist 'spots.' I hope they will get a chance to do that later, whereas I'm sure they will not have the opportunity to repeat the experience of this trip. We feel so deeply grateful to all of you who made it possible. Perhaps we didn't make international news, but we were *there*: we did something and we touched a lot of people. The message of "PEACE CHILD" is a fantasy, but it brings hope into a world of fear. I could see this in people after each performance — their tears said it. Yes, the world has problems — big problems. But with kids like these, and people like you supporting them, — we're going to be OK. Somehow we'll make it!

Betty May, 30th April 1985

Short Reports

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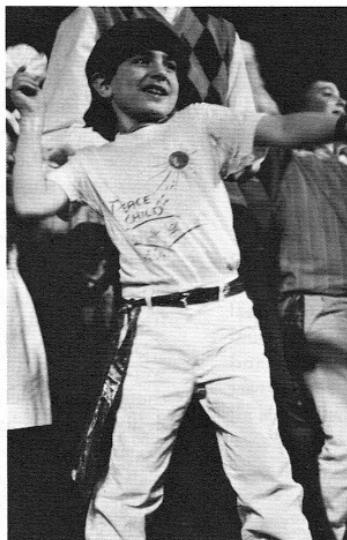
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"Peace Child . . .

It Works!

As I sat through the opening of Peace Child at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC several years ago, I was very moved by the sight and sound of children crying out for peace in a nuclear age. I thought that the Peace Child Foundation had hit upon a unique format to bring the discussion of the threat of nuclear war before an audience that might not have been interested in listening to a speaker on the same subject. As the children sang, danced and begged for peace, I felt that their simple but universal message should be brought to as many different groups as possible. I decided then to do what I could to bring this show before my American Reform Jewish community.

On February 16, 1985 the beginning of that goal was realized as Peace Child was performed before 800 representatives of the North American Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY) in Washington, DC. The performance, which included some scenes especially created for a Jewish audience, was one of the highlights of the four day NFTY National Biennial Convention. Reform Jewish high school leaders came from across the country to explore and discuss the issues that confronted them as individuals, as Jews and as Americans. The performance has led



N.F.T.Y. Conference Performance

to discussions among the various Reform Jewish summer camps, and a number of temples across the country, about mounting their own productions.

All I can say is that from my perspective it was just perfect—it reached our goals magnificently. The high school students participating in the conference loved the music, the dancing and the dazzle of the

show: at times they would applaud after every line. One number—The Military Industrial Complex—had them dancing in the aisles. Another number included in this performance, 'Ani V'atah,' a hebrew song meaning "You and I can change the world," had a special meaning to all in attendance. More importantly the audience was deeply touched by its message of concern over the possibility of the destruction of the world and the sense that they could make a difference in avoiding that outcome. They left that night aware, inspired and uplifted.

The show had an even greater impact on the Jewish children who performed as members of the cast. Through the process of learning the songs and lines, and through the discussions about the arms race that ensued, they were deeply touched by the nuclear reality and delighted to have an opportunity to join with others in calling for a change in the destructive direction which the United States and the Soviet Union are headed. When they sang on stage, they weren't just singing—they were shouting out for peace with all of the emotion, energy and sincerity they had. They left the hall not only convinced that they had been helpful in averting a nuclear nightmare, but also committed to continuing in their efforts. That's why I say—IT WORKS!

Glen Stein

Staff member, UAHC Religious Action Center

Russia

Two cast members from the San Francisco production of "Peace Child," Melissa Anderson and Larie Mott, were invited to visit the Soviet Union on a Youth Peace Tour to celebrate the beginning of the United Nations Year of Youth.

Our experience was so incredible, moving and thought-provoking that it is hard to condense it to paper. We had been told, prior to going, that a very treasured gift to them would be the "Peace Child" songs, and we found this to be true. The spirit of Peace Child in those songs is so undeniable and so powerful that we were really moved by their reception. During the course of the trip, we shared songs with members of the House of Friendship, Pioneer Palaces and the Soviet Women's Committee. We were asked to sing on the spur of the moment many times, once even on the street! The songs were well received by the people, and we hope that they were another step toward peace. In fact, our experiences in the Soviet Union paralleled "Peace Child" so closely, we felt at times as if we were re-living it. If our experience there is any indicator, when "Peace Child" is performed, the cast will have a fantastic experience!

And like in the play, our experience of the Soviet people was one of warmth, generosity

and love towards us and our purpose. They were always extremely interested in us, and we were showered with attention and gifts. Luckily, we had been forewarned of their generosity and had brought gifts with us to give in exchange. The most popular of these turned out to be the Peace Child buttons!

This was the time also of the Father Frost celebrations. This is a week long festival which culminates in New Years and is, with the exception of May Day, their biggest celebration. It is rather like our Christmas and New Year's holiday rolled into one. Gifts are exchanged, there are many parties (with caviar and champagne!), and tens of thousands of Muscovites spend New Year's Eve at Red Square dancing. We also ended up there, but beforehand, we had been invited to a household in Moscow for dinner and to watch the New Year's speeches from the Soviet Leadership on television. Our hostess translated, and we found that their New Year's focus is, in fact, quite different from our own. All evening long the speeches were about the suffering the Soviet people had been through during World War II, or as they call it, "The Great Patriotic War," and how they must never again allow war to occur. One of our strongest impressions during the entire trip was walking through the cities and seeing large "MIR" (Peace) signs on bill boards and posters everywhere—and they were permanent, not just up for the holidays.

Nearly everyone in Russia lost a family member in the war, and living was very difficult for years afterward. Now, by comparison, conditions are vastly improved, and they value what they have. They cherish their children, and in fact, this concern for their own as well as other children overlapped onto us! Perfect strangers would approach us, if they felt it was too cold, to "put on our hats"!

We were lucky enough to see many beautiful and impressive sights from Museums and monuments to puppet shows and school presentations. And we were also allowed to participate in wonderfully unique experiences, from a National Radio Moscow interview to many delightful, unplanned conversations, and we were told that, beyond all this, doors were opened for us that are normally kept shut. So we feel not only lucky, but extremely grateful for such an experience and only wish that all American students could have this opportunity. What an eye-opener it was!

But when we think of all the memories that we have carried back, the strongest and most treasured is that of all the generous, warm, and loving people we met, who went so far out of their way to make us feel welcome, and who so strongly desire peace. As "Peace Children," we hope that we were able to convince them that our desire is equally strong.

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JAMFEST 85

WORLD YOUTH FESTIVAL OF ARTS KINGSTON, JAMAICA

Gritting her teeth, National Administrator, Lucia Effros, concedes: "On balance, I think it was worthwhile; but the trip was not without a good share of frustration . . ."

Lucia had assembled a crack team of Peach Child singers from Washington DC to create a Peace Child presence at JAMFEST 85 — A World Youth Festival of Arts, held to mark the International Year of Youth and timed to coincide with a major International Youth Conference in Kingston, Jamaica. Both conference and Jamfest had been dogged by bad press, a result of not-so-covert USIA financial support and poor organization ("Jamaica was all about waiting for busses that didn't come," said one of the Peace Child team.)

Over seven days, the seven-person group gave seven performances to about five thousand young people. The performances were at the National Gallery of Art, the Prime Minister's Residence, and International 4-H Club Celebration, and three high schools. The pulsating gospel rhythms of "I BELIEVE" and the high falsetto wails of "MILITARY INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX" made the Peace Child group known and recognized throughout Kingston. "We definitely made our presence felt in Jamaica," said Lucia, "We were forever being recognized and asked to perform in airports, cafeterias, on beaches. At our final performance, the audience began to whoop their applause as soon as we were announced. They certainly got the message."

The group stayed in a convent with some German and Nigerian entertainers: both groups were anxious to have the Peace Child troupe visit their countries, and many people were anxious to know more about "PEACE CHILD" and how it could be brought to their countries. Many addresses were exchanged and intercultural bonds established.

Summing up, Lucia feels, "Our participation in the Festival was especially important because we presented a message of friendship and co-operation between children of the USA and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union—indeed all socialist nations—were conspicuous by their absence from the Festival despite its theme of "participation, development and peace." They had been deliberately excluded, and it was upsetting to see anti-communist slogans daubed on the walls in Kingston.

"Originally, this had made us hesitant: our message is about all children joining together to lead the world to peace. We made the decision to go because we felt that this message needed to be there; to be shared, - to be sung out joyfully, just as it will be sung at the World Youth Festival in Moscow later this summer. It is my hope and dream that "PEACE CHILD" will be heard and sung in ALL nations, in ALL languages, - that we will assist in breaking down, not maintaining the barriers that divide us, so that together we can create a world that resolves its differences by co-operative, peaceful means without the threat of nuclear violence.

"To this end, I believe JAMFEST 85 was a good initial step for us into the broad international arena."

Who's going to Russia with Peace Child?

It was an agonizing job selecting 15 young people from the uniformly excellent applications for our Summer Trip to the Soviet Union to co-produce "PEACE CHILD" with a group of Soviets. The response was such that, whatever happens with our trip this year, next year we will be sending several groups on Peace Child summer camps in the Soviet Union. The following, then, are the guinea pigs for what we hope will become an on-going summer program for the foundation: Colleen Barry, David Brickman, Bridget Condon, Caitlin Siegel (Maryland); Ian Gilman, Jamie Lopez (Washington); Adam & Tara Croan (Virginia); Karen Regelman, Laurie Tucker, Alexis Vaubel (Minnesota); Tony Potts (Texas); Darren Spence (Alaska); Mary Greening (California); Sarah Chumsky (New York).



XII МОСКВА 1985

Steve Riffkin of Peace Child California will be the Musical Director, David Woolcombe will be the overall director. The Soviets still have not given a firm answer to the request for the co-production — but they have agreed to have a version of "PEACE CHILD" performed during the World Youth Festival. So, one way or another, "PEACE CHILD" will be premiered in the Soviet Union this year.

YES! I want to be a Peace Child. *Please add my name to the membership.*

YES! I would like to enrol..... as a Trustee Member.
(Please attach trustee's full name & address, plus personal note if you wish).

Minimum Annual Membership: \$5 (child under 15)
\$10 (adults and Trustee)

Peace Child Foundation
3977 Chain Bridge Rd., Suite 204
Fairfax, VA 22030.
(703) 385-4494

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YES! I would also like to make a tax-deductible contribution to the work of the Peace Child Foundation:

_____ \$25; _____ \$100; _____ \$500; \$_____ other.

Materials:

No.		\$	\$
_____	Peace Child Study Guide (incl. Music Scores)	@ 12.50	_____
_____	Peace Child Script Only	@ 5.00	_____
_____	The Peace Book (Benson)	@ 9.50	_____
_____	Sound Cassette (songs)	@ 7.50	_____
_____	Video: "Introducing Peace Child" (state VHS or Beta format)	@ 30.00	_____
_____	T-Shirts (state size: Child/adult, large/medium/small)	@ 6.00	_____
_____	Add for postage/handling:		1.50

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

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