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# SHALOM

*Jewish Peace Letter*

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## C O N T E N T S

# We the Trees Speak of Simon Grosman



*Simon was not  
someone special.  
He was just  
another boy, a  
Jewish boy, living  
in Paris in 1942.*

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*From Where I Sit*

Stefan Merken

## Yom HaShoah is a day set aside for Jews to remember the Holocaust.

STEFAN MERKEN  
is Chair of the Jewish  
Peace Fellowship and  
co-editor of *Shalom*.

# Yom HaShoah: Holocaust Remembrance Day

**T**he year 2021 marks the 76<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of the extermination camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau. It also marks the end of the Second World War, and the liberation of the remaining extermination camps where Jews were being held. Here in the U.S.A. and in Israel we will observe Yom HaShoah on April 7-8 in 2021 (the 26th day of the month of Nisan) to also bring attention to the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. The European Union and United Nations recognize International Holocaust Remembrance Day on January 27 each year in recognition of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau on January 27, 1945.

The November issue of *Shalom* contained several articles on remembrance and resistance during the Holocaust as does this current issue. This issue also has an article on the Plowshares actions in America which dovetails into the resistance that is carried on still today.

Yom HaShoah is a day set aside for Jews to remember the Holocaust. For those of us who have grown up knowing full well what the Holocaust meant, the lives it took, it is a day of remembrance. But for the younger Jews, some who don't even understand the significance of the Holocaust, it should be a day of learning, coming to understanding the meaning of evil and hatred in Germany and the rest of Europe in the 1940s.

We are still anxious to hear from you. Do you have an article that you would want to share? The editorial board would be interested in reading it and considering it for publication. And as always, if you enjoy reading the newsletter and want to support the Jewish Peace Fellowship, then consider sending along a few dollars to cover our expenses. ☆



Yom HaShoah ceremony in the Israeli town of Kiryat Gat, 1963.

(PikiWiki Israel/Wikimedia Commons)

# SHALOM

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## Unnatural Disaster

Nan Lefenfeld



Maurice and Simon Grosman, circa 1940.

Mémorial de la Shoah/CDJC, MXII\_3099

## We the Trees Speak of Simon Grosman

**W**e, the trees, speak of everything. Of all you seek to remember and all you seek to forget. This is our fate.

You marshalled us for your terrible purposes. For war and genocide. You made us your auxiliaries.

On our fibers, you transmitted orders, reports, correspondence, communiqués. On our fibers, you wrote those lists. All those many names.

Without us, how would you have possibly kept track? Without us, how would you have gone about the work of organizing, stigmatizing, traumatizing, dehumanizing on such a massive scale?

Your children's children's children may not believe it. They may argue among themselves as to whether it is true. That all of it—the names, dates, vilest acts—were written on us. It will seem, to

them, inconceivable. Perverse.

But this is the problem. You made us into good accomplices but poor witnesses. Each page bears witness to...what? Something like the falling of a leaf. A fleeting shadow. A few footsteps on cobblestones. How to make sense of any of it? How many pages must one pore over to begin to understand what befell a single man or woman or child?

Simon Grosman, for example. It's Simon of whom we wish to speak. Not because he was someone special. He was just another boy, a Jewish boy, living in Paris.

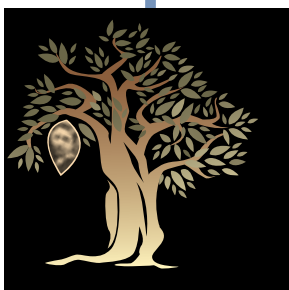
*Simon was not someone special. He was just another boy, a Jewish boy, living in Paris.*

Simon's name appears on two different deportation lists. As if he'd been sent to Auschwitz twice. The first time, in Convoy 15, which left France on August 5, 1942. The second time, in Convoy 22, which left on August 21. The boy's birthdate is the same on both lists: '14.11.31.' And the birthplace, the same too: Paris. In the later list, the family name is written as 'Grossman.' But, of course, the names were often misspelled.

The fact is that you humans are so careless. And your carelessness has consequences. Called upon to bear witness, we are hampered by your mistakes, omissions, ambiguities, imprecisions.

There was only one Simon Grosman born in Paris on November 14, 1931. Above is an undated photo of him with his brother, Maurice. The younger boy, the boy who is standing, the boy with the worried look on his face...that is Simon. We can deduce, from the apparent ages of the two, that the photo was taken on the eve of war.

The Grosman family lived in an apartment on the rue Feutrier, in the 18e



*Continued on next page*



*Internment Camp at Beaune-la-Rolande, 1941.*

*Mémorial de la Shoah/CDJC, CIII\_401.*

arrondissement. Number 28, a nondescript white building, like all the others on the street. A few steps from Sacré-Cœur.

Simon attended what was then the *école des garçons*, the elementary school for boys, at the foot of the Butte de Montmartre. Across from where tourists catch the funicular, to ascend the hill, to the cathedral.

His father, Matys, was a tailor, born in Czerwińsk, Poland, fifty miles south of Gdansk. Four small cards, yellowed with age, bear his name, the year of his birth (1894), and other bits of information. One bears the notation “Drancy 20-8-41.” This is what passes for testimony. A card. A date. How to make sense of it?

Paris, the twentieth of August 1941. On that day, the French police, assisted by the *Feldgendarmes* (German military police), launched the second major *rafle* (roundup) of Jews. At five-thirty in the morning, they cordoned off the entire eleventh arrondissement. Truly some feat, given the fact that the perimeter is five miles long. Why the eleventh arrondissement? Because it was home to many foreign-born Jews.

The roundup continued over four more days, with the police making arrests in eleven other arrondissements.

The twentieth of August was also the day that French and German authorities began interning Jews in an unfinished apartment project located in Drancy, a commune in the northeastern suburbs of Paris. By the time the roundup ended, on the twenty-fifth, 4,230 Jews found themselves imprisoned in that place. The internees were men between the ages of 18 and 50, the majority of them foreign-born.

The name ‘Matys Grosman’ also appears on a typewritten list of names, arranged alphabetically and headed by a page number: 12. Two lines of type devoted to each of nineteen men, beginning with ‘Jacques Gourevitch’ and ending with ‘Aron Haïm.’ Name, birthdate, place of birth, nationality, street address. Also, written in both French and German, their professions: tailors; carpenters; a deliveryman; a mechanic; a shopkeeper.

The nineteen were a part of the third

*Among the Jews rounded up were tailors, carpenters, a deliveryman, a mechanic, and a shopkeeper.*

*Continued on next page*



## Unnatural Disaster

group of people deported from France. Convoy 3, consisting of 934 men and 21 women, left the Drancy internment camp on June 22, 1942, and arrived at Auschwitz two days later.

We testify to the fact that, three weeks later, on July 16, the French police arrested four other members of the Grosman family: Matys' wife, Ruchla; two of their three daughters, Blima and Eva; and one of their two sons, Simon.

July 16, 1942 was the first day of a two-day operation that targeted foreign and stateless Jews throughout the greater Paris region. It would derive its now-infamous name—the Vel d'Hiv roundup—from the indoor sports arena that served as a holding pen for those arrested. The roundup marked the turning point of the Shoah in France: for the first time, whole families were swept up.

After being imprisoned in the stadium for four days, Ruchla and the children were taken to an internment camp sixty-five miles south of Paris, in the commune of Beaune-la-Rolande. Small, printed, registration cards completed for each of them have survived the many decades that have passed. Ruchla Simon (née Krida), then 52 years old, was reported to have been born in 'Porvasky,' Poland. Blima, then fifteen, and Eva, fourteen, had also been born in Poland, in Warsaw. Simon was, at that time, ten years, eight months old.

A list from Beaune-la-Rolande testifies to the fact that all four of them were housed in barrack 9, along with some 23 others, including twelve-year old twin boys named Jacob and Gerschel Rojzman. The twins were close in age to Simon; perhaps they became friends.

But on the fifth of August, a group of 1,013 persons—588 females and 425 males—was deported from the Beaune-la-Rolande camp, sent directly to Auschwitz. Ruchla, Blima, and Eva were in that transport. Though Simon's name was on the list, he was not on the train. He was in the camp. As were many other children, age ten and younger. All the youngest children, left behind.

Now we find ourselves called upon to testify to what was truly one of the most terrible chapters of the Shoah in France. Frankly, we did not intend to find ourselves in this position. We don't know how we got here. We simply intended to speak of Simon. Just Simon. He wasn't supposed to be emblematic of anything or any group. He was just a little boy with a very worried look in his eyes, as if he saw something no one else saw.

Throughout most of the summer, French and German authorities sparred and negotiated with one another in regard to the question of what to do with the Jewish children. The Nazis didn't want the children, at least not yet. It was Pierre Laval, Prime Minister of the French government in Vichy, who offered them up, urging the Germans to deport them with their parents.

There is an eight-page statistical table in the prefatory material of the *Memorial to the Jews Deported from France 1942-1944* (Table IV, pages xxviii-xxxv in the 1983 edition). It appears to be handwritten on a sheet of graph paper, as if drawn up for a school project. Though unsophisticated by today's standards, it's profound.

*The July 16, 1942 roundup marked the turning point of the Shoah in France: for the first time, whole families were swept up.*



*Ruchla and Matys Grosman, 1935.*

*Mémorial de la Shoah/CDJC, MXII\_3776.*



*Continued on next page*

## Unnatural Disaster

*The fact is that you  
humans kill your own  
kind. Even the kinder.*

**NAN LEFENFELD** has researched and written extensively on the subject of humanitarian resistance in France during the Shoah. She has also authored short stories that explore challenges confronted by survivors of the Shoah decades afterwards. One such story, "Family Witness," will appear in the *CCAR Journal: The Reform Jewish Quarterly*, in January 2021.

The table lists the number of individuals deported in each convoy by year of birth, beginning with 1849 and ending with 1943. Many of the little boxes are empty; an empty box indicates that no individuals deported in the convoy had been born in that particular year.

One need only look at where the empty boxes are. The empty boxes tell the story of when parents and children were separated from one another. The parents, deported. The children, held back, in the internment camp.

If one examines the data presented for Convoy 15, one sees that, while many adolescents were included in the transport, almost no children age 12 or younger were included. For example, while there were 45 adolescents around the age of 14 (i.e., having been born in 1928), there were, at most, three children in that transport who were around Simon's age, having been born in 1931.

Only seven in the group were born in 1930. The Rojzman twins were among them.

We don't know exactly how the convoy was composed. We don't know the instructions given to the French officials in charge of selecting detainees. We don't know what happened on the night of August fourth, or perhaps very early in the morning on August fifth.

Who wants to think about such things? A little boy separated from his mother and his sisters. Left alone, not knowing what might happen. He would spend the next two weeks in the camp, among other orphaned children, many of them much younger. Three, four, five. The atmosphere, one of fear, terror, chaos.

By the second week of August, German and French authorities had reached an understanding: the children could be deported, *en masse*, provided a few adults accompany them in each cattle car. Within days, thousands of children in Beaune-la-Rolande and its sister camp, Pithiviers, were being transferred to Drancy, to await deportation.

Simon was transferred from Beaune-la-Rolande to Drancy on August 19 and deported two days later, in Convoy 22, on August 21.

None of the six members of the Grosman family who were deported survived. Simon's oldest sister, Mathilde, born in 1920, was arrested with her husband, Maurice, in August 1943. They were deported to Auschwitz on November 20, 1943 (Convoy 62).

Maurice was the only member of the family to survive. He attributed his survival to three strokes of luck. First, shortly before the Vel d'Hiv roundup, he was hospitalized due to an injury he received in an anti-Semitic attack. (Upon seeing the yellow star sewed onto his jacket, another child delivered him a swift kick, with a wooden clog.) Second, the doctors at the hospital discovered he had a rare case of bone tuberculosis, which required extended treatment. And third, medical staff hid his Jewish identity and sheltered and treated him until after the war had ended.

The fact is that you humans kill your own kind. Even the *kinder*.

You're not the only animal species to do that. It's just that you've gotten so good at it. Despite our own limitations and inadequacies, we can testify to that. ☆

*The author wishes to thank archivists at the Mémorial de la Shoah in Paris for the invaluable assistance they so kindly provided. In particular, I am extremely grateful to Karen Taïeb, Chief Archivist, and members of her staff, as well as to Lior Lalieu-Smadja, Chief of the Photographic Service.*



*Saving by Signing*

Seth B. Goldsmith

*Samuel Wolbach was so impressed with David Kaufmann that he offered him a job in Grand Island*

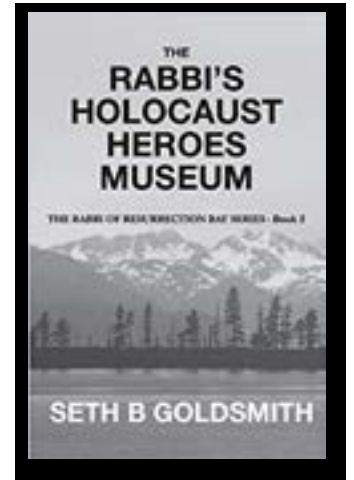
## The Holocaust Heroes of Nebraska

**O**f all the more than thirty heroes I researched for my new historical novel, *The Rabbi's Holocaust Heroes Museum*, I was particularly intrigued by David Kaufmann and Feodora Kahn of Grand Island, Nebraska. These two cousins, born more than three decades apart, saved approximately eighty families from the madness of Nazi Germany without ever leaving Nebraska. Who were these heroes and what did they do?

Their story begins in 1903 when twenty-six year old Kaufmann emigrated from his native Germany with dreams of developing a retailing career in America. A few months after arriving in New York he was hired as a clerk and window dresser at the Abraham and Strauss (A&S) department store on Fulton Street in Brooklyn. One day Kaufmann assisted a customer named Samuel Wolbach, the owner of a small two-story department store in Grand Island who was in New York City ordering merchandise for sale back home. Wolbach was so impressed with David Kaufmann that he offered him a job in Grand Island, and convinced Kaufmann that there was a quite a good future to be had in the Midwest.

Two years after arriving in Nebraska, Kaufmann left his position as a floor walker and window trimmer with S. N. Wolbach & Sons to follow his goal of becoming an entrepreneur. Recalling his experiences with the Woolworth stores in Manhattan and Brooklyn, Kaufmann formed a partnership with two other Wolbach employees and together they opened a five and dime store patterned after

*Continued on next page*



David Kaufmann.



This undated postcard image shows the S. N. Wolbach & Sons department store in Grand Island, Nebraska, where David Kaufmann worked as a floor walker and window dresser.

# Saving by Signing

Woolworths. By the early 1930s David Kaufmann owned not only a chain of these five and dime stores, but also movie theatres and a bank. He was a millionaire who, interestingly enough, never lost his fortune during the Great Depression that began with the stock market crash in October 1929 and lasted for almost a decade.

Throughout his years in America David Kaufmann kept up his connections with family and friends in Germany via letters and periodic visits. Feodora Levy Kahn, born in 1910, was one of the many relatives that Kaufmann visited and stayed in touch with. By 1936 Feodora was married and acutely aware of the deteriorating political situation in Germany. She wrote to Kaufmann and asked for his sponsorship so that she and her husband (Isidor) could leave Germany for America. Kaufmann, true to his word, responded by promptly filling out and signing an Affidavit of Support. On September 7, 1936 the Kahns arrived at Ellis Island and shortly thereafter headed to Grand Island.

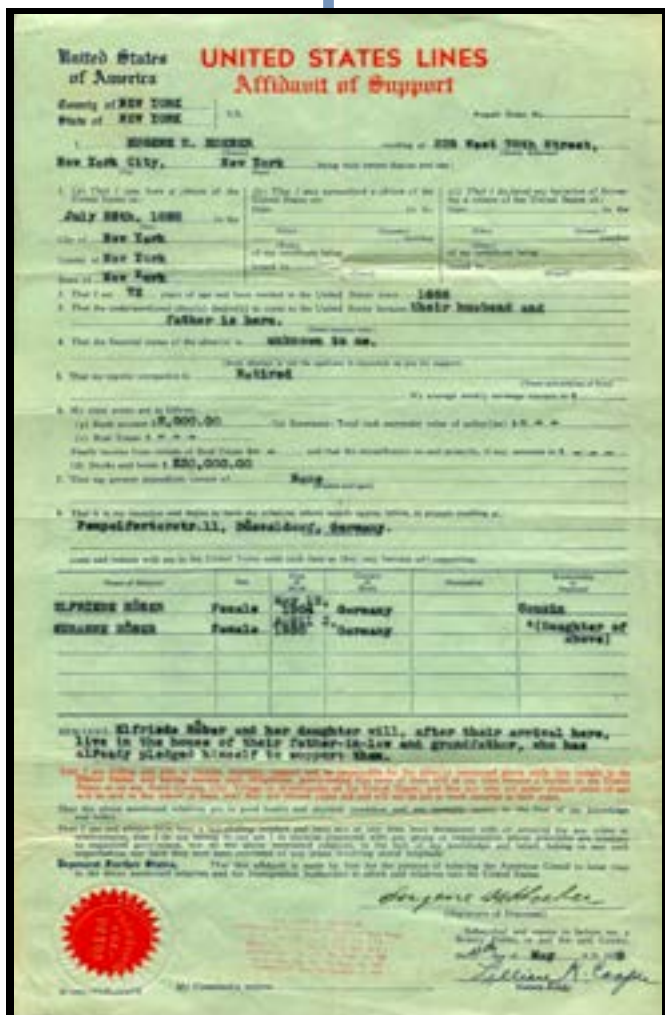
*Fortunately, Feodora Kahn chose to “pay forward” what David Kaufmann had done for her and her husband.*

Such affidavits have been part of the immigration landscape since colonial times. Initially these documents were used to keep the destitute from the shores of the colonies. In 1892 the first federal immigration statute was passed and included a clear provision that excluded immigrants who were likely to become public charges. These provisions initially were under the jurisdiction of states and the guarantors tended to be charitable organizations and steamship companies.

By the 1930s the sponsors/guarantors had primarily become individuals, usually family members already in the U.S.A. who were required to identify the immigrants being sponsored along with providing affirmations of the health of the immigrant. The sponsors were required to fill out a single page document that identified themselves as citizens (and when naturalized the sponsor had to provide documentation), followed by presenting information about their assets and income and then signing the sponsor’s pledge, “That I am willing and able to receive, maintain, support and be responsible for the alien(s) mentioned... [in this document]...while they remain in the United States, and hereby assume such obligations, guaranteeing that none of them at any time become a burden on the United States or any State, County, City, Village or Municipality of the United States; and that any who are under the age of sixteen will be sent to day school at least until they are sixteen years old and will not be put to work unsuited to their years.” Today these affidavits are ten-page long documents.

Crucial to anyone’s immigration to the United States during the 1930s was sponsorship by a financially well-off person. The sponsor not only needed to be willing and financially able to sponsor the new immigrant, but they also had to convince various government bureaucrats that such immigrants would not be a financial burden to the government. Without Kaufmann’s signature on the form and his wealth backing

*Continued on next page*



David Kaufmann filled out an Affidavit of Support similar to this one provided by Eugene Hoerber for Elfriede Höber and Susanne Höber, May 1939.



## Saving by Signing

*The central question is, how many of us today would be willing to sign?*

SETH B. GOLD-SMITH, Sc.D., J.D., is Professor Emeritus at University of Massachusetts at Amherst

up the pledge of support, Feodora and her husband would likely have become another sad statistic: refugees denied entry because a government official refused to accept some aspect of the sponsor’s affidavit.

But the story doesn’t end with Feodora and her husband Isidor being saved! Fortunately, Feodora Kahn decided to “pay it forward.”

For the next decade Kahn actively communicated with relatives and friends in Germany and arranged for Kaufmann to sponsor more than eighty families. Amongst those who were rescued by the Kaufmann-Kahn partnership were Hugo Kahn, a leader of the Jewish community in New Orleans; and Guintier Kahn, the dermatologist who developed the drug Rogaine and used his fortune to support programs and organizations in the United States and Israel including the Sophie and Feodora Kahn Professorship in Biology, named for his mother and aunt at the University of Nebraska, Omaha.

It is estimated that Feodora’s proactive behavior along with David Kaufmann’s generosity and willingness to put his hard-earned fortune on the line more than eighty times, directly saved the lives of two hundred and fifty people. But Kaufmann’s generosity didn’t stop once the new immigrants arrived. He took a personal interest in each family sometimes arranging a job or even, in one instance, buying a farm in Iowa for a refugee family. And always David Kaufmann was happy to host his extended family on visits to Grand Island. It’s no wonder that the American daughter of a couple he saved said she always looked forward to seeing Uncle David, because he was the only “grandfather” she ever had.

The central question raised by the story of David Kaufmann and Feodora Kahn is: How many of us would be willing to sign an Affidavit Of Support under section 213A of The Immigration and Naturalization Act that would obligate us, as the sponsor, to insure the support of the newly arrived immigrants at 125 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (\$26,200 for a family of four in 2020)?

Kaufmann with the help of Kahn took such a risk. As a postscript, not one of the eighty families that he brought to America ever applied for any type of public assistance! ✧

*Kaufmann and Kahn intervened to directly save 80 families totaling 250 lives.*



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## *Swords into Plowshares*

Rosalie G. Riegler

# The Kings Bay Plowshares Seven: A Courageous Witness for Peace

**A**cting on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination, a group of seven Christian activists broke into the Kings Bay Naval Base in St. Mary's, Georgia on April 4, 2018. They chose that date to call attention to MLK's triple threats of nuclearism, racism, and materialism. They carried with them MLK's statement that "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world is my own government." Calling themselves the Kings Bay Plowshares Seven, they acted as part of the on-going nuclear resistance movement called Plowshares, started in 1980 by Phil Berrigan and others of Jonah House in Baltimore.

*Plowshares activists draw their purpose from Isaiah 2:4: "And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore."*

Those who participate in the "divine obedience" of a Plowshares action take their purpose and their goal from Isaiah 2:4. "And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore."

Their actions are grounded in nonviolence but differ strikingly from what one can call "normal" nonviolent resistance to war, where people risk arrest by protesting in some way, often simply by trespassing into a government installation or other place where they are forbidden, acting in full view of police and bystanders. Plowshares activists act in secret, often after long months of study and planning, sometimes in the middle of the night and in extremely adverse conditions of weather and terrain. They symbolically—and sometimes actually—destroy property which they deem "improper" because it can cause unimaginable death to entire civilizations. They are always careful, however, to ensure that no human is injured or killed, either themselves or the personnel who arrest them. They adopt these tactics in order to ensure the success of their action, and to make the strongest statement possible against the weapons which will destroy the world if they are not abolished and dismantled.

From the beginning, the tools of a Plowshares action have usually been simple household hammers and blood, hammers to symbolically strike at a symbol of a nuclear weapon, and blood—often their own—to symbolize the oceans of blood that will flow in a nuclear strike. Often documents are left which the resisters hope to present at trial: Codes of International Law, the Nuremberg Principles, international disarmament treaties. The Kings Bay Plowshares Seven used these tools as well, following their more than 200 predecessors in 101 similar disarmament actions, 58 in the U.S.A. and 43 in other countries.

Not all Plowshares resisters are Christians. Two Jew-



*A group of seven Christian activists broke into the Kings Bay Naval Base in St. Mary's, Georgia on April 4, 2018.*

*Continued on next page*

## Swords into Plowshares

ish war resisters who participated in Plowshares actions were Katya Komisaruk, who acted alone and turned herself in, and Dr. Barry Roth, who acted with Phil Berrigan and others. Komisaruk was sentenced to five years in prison but served only two, due to what she called “divine intervention.” Roth, who was a draft resister in the Vietnam days, took part in the Aegis Plowshares in 1991 but spent only a few days in prison. All charges were dismissed at the last minute by a judge who called Phil Berrigan “the conscience of a nation.”

Here’s how Roth explains his position: “My heritage is Jewish. My principal practice had been Buddhist. The people I had been most often been involved with in this world for 15 years were the radical Catholics. What’s true is true. Different people have different ways of understanding that and talking about it. But I don’t think there’s a Jewish truth, or a Catholic truth, or a Hindu truth, or a Moslem truth, or a Buddhist truth, or a Native American truth.”

While Barry Roth, Phil Berrigan and three others boarded an Aegis Destroyer carrying nuclear missiles, many Plowshares resisters target Trident Submarines. Kings Bay in Georgia houses six nuclear submarines, each having the power to destroy all life on earth.

We in the U.S.A. can’t imagine the enormity of the destruction even one nuclear missile carries, and so we stick our heads in the sand and don’t think about it, even if we profess to be peacemakers. Plowshares activists not only think about and study it, but they act to witness their knowledge and carry the action forward in a trial and the redemptive suffering of incarceration.

The King Bay Seven group, who planned together for months before their action, was heavily influenced by the Catholic Worker movement, founded by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin in 1933. From the beginning, the Catholic Worker has been pacifist. Among the present-day Kings Bay Seven is Dorothy Day’s granddaughter Martha Hennessy, who like others in the group has served prison terms for earlier Plowshares or other resistance actions.

Here’s what Hennessy wrote about their night on the Kings Bay Base: “We walked in the dark, stars overhead, with Orion at our shoulder and the waning moon rising late. Praise to you Dear God, for this gift of Eden. There were fire flies and croaking frogs to keep us company. And to think the logic of Trident is the obliteration of Creation. What did God whisper to my ancestors and then to me? ‘Swords into Plowshares!’ . . . We walked onto a military base that harbors the ultimate destruction, and we prayed for the power of a message, of a witness that could reach many ears; conversion of free will towards life-giving work and away from death dealing.”

Catholic Worker Plowshares resister Jerry Ebner, who participated in an action in the cornfields of the Midwest, when many missiles were stored in below-ground silos, gives insight into Isaiah’s command: “I see ‘beating swords into plowshares’ in Isaiah as not only a vision of the future but also a covenant, an agreement between God and humankind. . . . As I understand Isaiah’s scripture, peace won’t come without people following through and taking personal responsibility for the weapons. . . . When people of conscience and courage risk their freedom so their anti-nuclear credo reaches a wider audience, it is partly in hope that people will hear their actions and become themselves anti-nuclear activists and resisters. . . . Yet another reason is to preserve civil liberties and to retain one’s personal integrity, to remember that we all have the freedom to say no to policies and practices and institutions that are morally repugnant. Our distraught world needs people who aren’t



Left to right: Clare Grady, Liz McAlister, Patrick O’Neill (in back, holding sign), Carman Trotta, Fr. Steve Kelly, SJ, Martha Hennessy, Mark Colville.

*Continued on next page*

*“Our distraught world needs people who aren’t afraid to speak the truth and take the consequences.”*

—Jerry Ebner, *Plowshares resister.*

afraid to speak the truth and take the consequences.”

The Kings Bay Seven knew what they were risking. They worked and prayed on the base for several hours and videotaped their actions, a first for a Plowshares action. They were finally arrested, incarcerated at the Brunswick Detention Center, and charged with conspiracy for planning the action, trespassing by cutting through a wire fence, and “depredation and destruction of government property” by pouring their own blood and hammering with household hammers on a metal shrine to the weapons.

The group faced up to ten years in prison. Some remained in jail until their trial in October of 2019; some bonded out for medical reasons and to spend time with family and community. Complicated legal delays caused the judge to rule at the very last minute that a theologian, an esteemed legal expert, and a Roman Catholic Bishop would not be allowed to testify as to their compelling religious beliefs.

At their jury trial, the defendants said they entered the base not to commit a crime but to prevent one. Defendant Mark Colville told supporters: “Once again, a federal court has plainly turned a blind eye to the criminal and murderous enterprise from which the Pentagon has repeatedly refused to desist for the past 73 years. According to international and constitutional law, both of which are binding and superseding law in all U.S. jurisdictions, the building and possession of first-strike nuclear weapons is a crime.” Nevertheless, the jury took less than an hour to convict all seven of three felonies and one misdemeanor.

Then another kind of waiting began. Hundreds of supportive letters were sent to the presiding judge. A petition asking the U.S. Attorney General to dismiss the charges was signed by thousands. National and international media spread the word. When the pandemic hit, the defendants pleaded for a sentence of home confinement as entering prison could well mean their death by COVID.

### **Finally, on June 8, sentencing began for the Kings Bay Plowshares Seven:**

**Liz McAlister**, widow of Phil Berrigan: time served and three years’ probation.

Dorothy Day’s granddaughter, **Martha Hennessy**: 10 months.

**Fr. Steve Kelly**: 33 months incarceration and three years of supervised release after already spending 30 months in jail. Among the most faithful of nuclear resisters, Fr. Kelly has spent more than 11 years in prison for his actions and awaits additional prison time for protest at the Trident submarine Kitsap-Bangor Naval Base.

**Patrick O’Neill**: 14 months in prison.

**Carmen Trotta**: 14 months in prison.

**Clare Grady**: 12 months plus a day.

**Mark Colville**: Not yet sentenced at press time.

Plowshares participants need many supporters: those who help to facilitate the action (being careful not to be charged for conspiracy), people to provide financial and moral support, others to conduct public relations campaigns and raise funds to support the families of resisters.

Visit <https://www.kingsbayplowshares7.org/> for the latest details and for ways you can carry the witness to your own community by inviting the Kings Bay Seven or other experts to speak.

Remember, as these courageous prophets for peace did, that “One Trident launch of one nuclear missile warhead will end the world.”



**DR. ROSALIE RIEGLE** is Professor Emerita in English from Saginaw Valley State University. Mother of four daughters, with seven grown grandchildren, she now lives in Evanston, Illinois, where she remains active in several Catholic Worker communities in Chicago and works on anti-nuclear issues with her parish, St. Nicholas of Evanston. An oral historian, her four published books are *Voices from the Catholic Worker* (Temple, 1993), *Dorothy Day: Portraits by Those Who Knew Her* (Orbis, 2003), *Doing Time for Peace: Resistance, Family, and Community* (Vanderbilt, 2013), and *Crossing the Line: Nonviolent Resisters Speak Out for Peace* (Wipf and Stock Cascade, 2014.)

## *Fellowship of Reconciliation*

# FOR-USA's Statement on Passage of UN Treaty Outlawing Nuclear Weapons

**T**he Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR-USA) joins peace-loving people around the world in celebrating the ratification of the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear weapons. Passage of the Treaty <<http://disarmament.un.org/treaties/t/tpnw/text>> happened on an already auspicious date—the 75th anniversary of the United Nations—October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020 when Honduras became the 50<sup>th</sup> UN member state to ratify the convention. With this treaty, each ratifying country is telling the world to follow them in investing in peace and human security. On January 22, 2021 it will become international law.

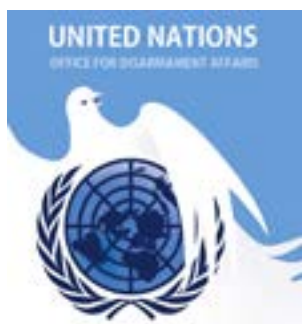
UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, commented that its passage represented “culmination of a worldwide movement to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons.” The treaty requires that signatories should never under any circumstances “develop, test, produce, manufacture, otherwise acquire, possess or stockpile nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.” The accord also prohibits the transfer or use of nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices and the threat to use such weapons.

Nine nuclear-armed powers, including the United States, continue to stand unified against the treaty, and they should be ashamed. The message of this treaty is that the world must do more than just “reduce nuclear risks.” The world must eliminate nuclear risks by eliminating nuclear weapons.

Emma Jordan-Simpson, Executive Director of the Fellowship of Reconciliation's U.S. branch, expressed a note of optimism at the new international law. “In the face of potential backlash, the ratification of this treaty by 50 nations is evidence that millions of people across the world believe another world is possible. A billion more people represented by the additional countries that have signed this treaty, but not yet ratified it, represents a formidable momentum toward the rejection of the lie that safety and security can only be achieved through the build-up of world-destroying nuclear weapons.”

“The world is being ravaged by a lethal pandemic, the effects of which could have been mitigated to some degree by the resources that have foolishly been lavished on the 26 major corporations that lobby to produce more nuclear weapons. Instead of guaranteeing the profitability of the 382 banks, insurance companies, pension funds and asset managers invested in the nuclear weapons industry, we could be using those resources to guarantee medical equipment, income, and food. The fact that such a large group of nations is moving forward to outlaw nuclear weapons is a welcome sign of sanity and hope. I believe peacemaking begins at home. Many have called this treaty naïve and meaningless, yet it serves as inspiration to those with the vision and commitment to work to secure a wise, just, and meaningful future for our children and the planet. That reality of that future rises brightly as we reject the idea of national security through weapons and bombs, and as we reject the idea of community safety through policing and prisons.” ☆

*50 countries have ratified the treaty. The United States and 8 other nuclear powers oppose it.*



This article originally appeared on October 27, 2020 at <https://forusa.org/2020/10/27/for-usas-statement-on-passage-of-un-treaty-outlawing-nuclear-weapons/>.