The Third Camp in Theory and Practice: An Interview with Joanne Landy and Thomas Harrison

written by Kent Worcester | August 12, 2018

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Introduction

Joanne Landy (1941–2017) and Thomas Harrison (1948–) became socialists as teenagers and have remained involved in the democratic left ever since. They were active in the student protest movement at the University of California at Berkeley in the 1960s, where they met and became close friends and collaborators. During the 1970s, they became increasingly interested in the issue of labor rights in Central and Eastern Europe, and they worked to link democratic and social justice struggles in the Eastern Bloc with social movements in the United States, the West, and the Third World. Until Joanne Landy's death in October 2017, they were co-directors of the Campaign for Peace and Democracy (CPD), which was founded in 1982. Initially, the organization was called the Campaign for Peace and Democracy/East and West, but with the end of the Cold War the title was shortened.

The Campaign promoted a policy of "détente from below" and worked to advance "a new, progressive, and non-militaristic U.S. foreign policy—one that encourages democracy and social justice by promoting solidarity with activists and progressive movements throughout the world."[1] During the Cold War, the Campaign defended independent human rights, labor, and peace activists in Soviet Bloc countries and enlisted support for them among labor, human rights and anti-war activists in the West. CPD also mounted campaigns in opposition to U.S.-supported dictatorships in Latin America like Chile and Nicaragua and organized public support for these campaigns by Eastern Bloc dissidents. In the post-Cold War period, CPD opposed U.S.-led wars in the Middle East and Israel's denial of Palestinian rights, and supported movements for democracy and social justice in Greece, Mexico, and the Middle East, including Iran, Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, and Syria, while opposing Russian intervention in Syria, Ukraine, and Georgia.[2]

As young radicals, Landy and Harrison gravitated to the "third camp" wing of the organized left. Perhaps the most prominent figure in the third camp tendency was Max Shachtman, a writer and organizer who led a major split out of the Socialist Workers Party in 1940, and helped launch a succession of socialist groups and periodicals in the mid-century period. However, by the end of the 1950s Shachtman had abandoned third camp principles, becoming a defender of United States foreign policy.[3] Another key figure on the third camp left was Hal Draper, who later won acclaim for his five-volume series on the revolutionary ideas of Karl Marx. While Shachtman was based in New York City, Draper was a longtime Bay Area resident and, along with Joanne Landy, Joel Geier, Mike Parker, and other "left Shachtmanites," played a leading part in Berkeley's Free Speech movement.[4]

The term "third camp" implies a rejection of both the Western alliance (the first camp) and Soviet-style societies (the second camp), in favor of democratic movements in opposition to western capitalism, as well as various forms of authoritarian statism. Since its inception, the CPD developed and advanced a third camp perspective on a range of global issues, from dissident movements in

Eastern Europe and the breakup of Yugoslavia, to the rise of the Arab Spring in 2010–2011, and contemporary conflicts in the Near and Middle East. Arguably, the CPD helped to reorient sections of the peace movement and the left more generally away from a focus on great power actors to a strategy of building movements from below across national and regional borders.

Joanne Landy joined the Young People's Socialist League (YPSL), the youth group of the Socialist Party, in 1958. She became active in the YPSL left wing, and along with Draper, Geier, and others, helped launch Berkeley's Independent Socialist Club (ISC) in 1964. During this period, Landy was also heavily involved in the Free Speech Movement. Thomas Harrison moved to Berkeley in 1966, and joined the ISC in the same year. As the group evolved—changing its name to the International Socialists (IS) in 1969 and moving toward a "democratic centralist" internal regime—Landy and Harrison found themselves increasingly at odds with the group's trajectory. They were expelled in 1972 for violating internal discipline, and remained independent socialist activists afterwards, though collaborating with like-minded socialist organizations and individuals, including many who were in the ISC and/or IS. In addition to their work on behalf of the Campaign, Landy and Harrison contributed to debates over foreign policy, health care, the two-party system, and third party politics, through public lectures and contributions to the socialist journal *New Politics*, along with other magazines and newspapers such as *The Nation*, *The Progressive*, and the *New York Times*.

In their capacities as co-directors of CPD, Landy and Harrison worked alongside several prominent figures, such as the Berkeley student radical Mario Savio, Chilean playwright Ariel Dorman, whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg, actor Ed Asner, French leftist writer Daniel Singer, then-radical Polish dissident Jacek Kuron, and the historian and anti-nuclear activist E.P. Thompson. The conversation that follows addresses important theoretical and strategic issues, but it also touches on these and other larger-than-life personalities. As the conversation makes clear, Landy and Harrison developed a carefully considered approach to social activism that combined a firm commitment to political clarity with a willingness to pursue friendships and common activity with people from a broad range of backgrounds and perspectives.

The interview is organized into eleven sections. The first and second (Family Backgrounds, and Radical Politics) explore the social milieu in which Joanne Landy and Thomas Harrison were radicalized in the late 1950s (Landy) and mid-1960s (Harrison). The third, fourth, and fifth sections (The Independent Socialist Club, Socialist Horizons, and The International Socialists) address their involvement in organized third camp politics from the mid-1960s through the early 1970s. The history of Shachtmanism is not well documented and these sections may be of particular interest to readers who are curious about the development of radical, small-d democratic leftism in the United States. The sections that follow (Expulsion and Beyond, Solidarnosc, and *Détente* from Below) are concerned with the turn Landy and Harrison made in the mid-1970s toward building solidarity with Soviet bloc activists and dissidents, which led to the formation of the Campaign for Peace and Democracy in the early 1980s. The final sections (Liberal Interventionism, and The Near and Middle East) explore the ways in which Landy and Harrison responded to the collapse of the Soviet Union and allied regimes in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as how they sought to apply the third camp template to developments in the Near and Middle East in the wake of the United States' invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the Arab Spring uprisings in 2010–2011.

The first half of the interview addresses the question of socialist organization in the U.S. during the midcentury era, while the second is concerned with how two leading third camp activists responded to major international and global crises and conflicts over the past four decades. While a certain amount of biographical information is presented in these pages, there is also a great deal of political analysis that tackles contested issues on the United States and international left.

In 2014, *Left History* published my interview with Phyllis and Julius Jacobson, who founded and

subsequently co-edited *New Politics* for four decades.[5] That interview focused on the Jacobsons' journey from party building in the 1930s and 1940s to producing a pluralistic journal of leftist opinion and debate during the final decades of the twentieth century. The present interview tracks the ways in which two sixties activists have sought to relate third camp principles to ever-changing realities throughout their adult lives. In tandem, the two interviews provide an in-depth look at the development of third camp politics from the 1930s to the present day.

Family Backgrounds

Kent Worcester (KW): Did you come from the kinds of families that prepared you for the world of leftwing activism?

Joanne Landy (JL): My mother was a liberal activist—active in the Parent-Teacher Association, fighting for integrated schools in Chicago in the 1950s. She was not a radical. She supported Planned Parenthood, civil rights, and so on, but she was a little like the people today who would argue that you should vote for Hillary Clinton over Bernie Sanders in the Democratic primary because "she would have had a better chance to win against the Republican" (though perhaps I'm being unfair—she might well have supported Sanders. Since she's no longer alive, I can't ask her). But she was a real activist. She would spend hours on the phone talking to allies in the PTA. She was really good at convincing people of her point of view, taking a lot of time, and both feeling and showing respect for people she disagreed with. I learned a lot from her about the nuts and bolts of organizing.

I had a younger sister—four years younger. I was born in 1941 and she was born in 1945. She died at the age of 36 from alcohol and drugs. My dad was German and Jewish. He left Germany in 1933. He had trained as a lawyer, but the Nazis did not allow Jews to serve in the professions. I don't think he saw what was coming in Germany, but he knew that things were getting bad. Once he left he lived in France for two years and then came to the U.S. in 1935. He earned a Ph.D. in library science and later became the director of the library at Chicago State University (when he started it was Chicago Teachers College and Wilson Junior College), which is now in the news because it's being starved of funds. It's tragic because it was a kind of avenue of mobility for black youth. My dad wasn't a liberal—he tended more toward moderate conservatism—but he was very proud of the University and the opportunities it offered to people who had few opportunities.

KW: So when the civil rights movement came along they were both sympathetic.

JL: I wouldn't say that. My mother was very sympathetic, but my father complained about how disruptive Martin Luther King was. Then later, when Malcolm X came along, he contrasted him to Martin Luther King. I said, "well, Daddy, don't you remember how you used to denounce Martin Luther King?" He would just mutter something in response. His takeaway from the German experience was that it was important to maintain order. He had a visceral reaction against chaos. Over time he became mellower about the Civil Rights Movement, but his initial reaction was to say that he was against segregation but that this wasn't the way to change things.

So it was a mixed marriage in more than one sense. He was Jewish and she was Unitarian, but at my father's insistence they agreed to raise my sister and me in the Jewish tradition. Then again, at my mother's insistence we always had a Christmas tree. My father would turn ashen when it went up a few days before Christmas and regained his color when the tree was taken down in early January. A little tension there.

Thomas Harrison (TH): My father was a career army officer, whereas my mother's background was labor liberal. Neither of my parents went to college. My paternal grandfather was a career army

sergeant stationed on one of those sleepy pre-World War II bases, this one in Washington State—Fort Casey, on an island at the entrance to Puget Sound. It had big guns trained seaward that were meant to defend Seattle from a maritime invasion. I don't think my dad originally intended to follow in his father's footsteps. He worked at the Isaacson steel mill in Seattle and as a merchant seaman on a Dutch ship before he was drafted after Pearl Harbor. Dad saw combat at the Battle of Okinawa, one of the worst, and later in Korea.

My mother came from a working class family, most of them in the building trades. Her dad was a house painter and a staunch trade unionist. Seattle had this fabulous history of militant labor—the IWW, the 1919 General Strike, etc.—of which I was very much aware even at an early age. I used to do odd jobs for a neighbor, an elderly widow named Betty, who told me how she and her husband would join the mass pickets, thousands of them, in support of the 1934 waterfront strike. My brothers and I were taught never to cross a picket line, and whenever my mother would drive by one she would honk and wave. She was always a New Deal Democrat, and I am sure that had she lived she would have been an enthusiastic supporter of Bernie Sanders. During the War she worked at a radio station in Seattle and belonged to a union that was controlled or heavily influenced by CPers. After she married my father, who had by then become an officer, the FBI came to our door to ask some questions about that; my parents were extremely upset.

KW: Did she support Henry Wallace in 1948?

TH: It's interesting that you ask me this. I don't think so, but her brother told me, only a short time ago, that he voted for Wallace in '48. My father became a Reagan Democrat in 1980, for reasons having to do with foreign policy. He was liberal on social issues but he was a hawk. Dad abhorred Communism, of course, but he always had a sneaking interest in it. For example he took me to hear a speech at an outdoor rally in San Jose by Glen Taylor, a fellow traveler and one-time senator from Idaho who had been Wallace's running mate in '48. Anyway, he and I had terrible fights about the Vietnam War, the New Left, the draft, and that sort of thing.

We moved around a lot but both of my parents had roots in Seattle, and it's where I was born, and we sometimes lived there when I was growing up. I was closest to my maternal grandmother's side of the family, who were Swedes by way of Norway. My grandmother migrated from Oslo, with her parents and eight of her ten siblings, in 1914. She was active in a Swedish sect, the Mission Covenant Church, and I was baptized at the "Swedish Tabernacle" in downtown Seattle. We also spent time in Germany, Japan, New Orleans, Baltimore, Monterey, Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, and Augusta, Georgia. Never lived in one place longer than three years. I went to a segregated junior high school in a suburb of New Orleans (and later David Duke's base)—and got in a lot of trouble with my schoolmates for supporting integration, as you might imagine. I really hated that place, hated the whole South.

KW: You both went to Berkeley as undergraduates.

JL: I went to a few schools before I ended up in Berkeley. I started at the University of Chicago just before I turned sixteen. I was there for two years. It was then that I met my first husband—Sy Landy.[6] He lived in New York, so I moved to New York in the fall of 1959.

KW: How old were you when you got married?

JL: Eighteen. My parents wondered if I was perhaps a little young, but you have to understand that at the time it was not so very unusual. In general, middle class kids who went to college got married at 21 or 22, but not infrequently they were younger. Things have really changed since then. My parents weren't too upset by it. They simply wanted to make sure that I was doing what I wanted to

do.

Radical Politics

KW: Was Sy Landy a Marxist at this point?

JL: Oh yeah. We met in the Young Peoples Socialist League (YPSL), pronounced *yipsel*, which was the youth group of the Socialist Party. In high school I had attended workshops organized by the American Friends Service Committee, and I was a committed pacifist by the age of 12 or 13. I made my parents have a minute of silence before every meal, which is something I'd picked up from the Quakers. They patiently went along. I joined YPSL in the late 1950s—1958—which was around the same time that the Shachtman group, the Independent Socialist League (ISL), decided to disband and join the Socialist Party.[7] As a result, the Shachtman youth group, the Young Socialist League (YSL) joined YPSL. In fact, it was Debbie Meier, who had been in the ISL and YSL, who recruited me into YPSL.[8] There were other groups at the University of Chicago in the late 1950s—there were members of the Cochranite group, and the Socialist Workers Party. George Rawick was teaching at the University of Chicago and he had been a Shachtmanite and close to YPSL as well.[9]

I spent a lot of time reading socialist books and magazines. I was reading a lot of George Orwell (*Homage to Catalonia* and more), of course Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution*, and Edmund Wilson's *To the Finland Station*—there were a bunch of things you were supposed to have read if you were in or around YPSL. Debbie kept pressing me to join YPSL, and I kept telling her, "Well, there's so much more I need to read." She finally said, in an exasperated voice, "Joanne, there will always be more to read. If you basically agree with us now you should help build the organization. If you change your mind later you can always leave." "Okay, okay, okay," I finally said.

Close to when I joined—it might have been just before, or just after—George Rawick and I had a big argument about pacifism. George used to look at his fingernails whenever he would have a serious conversation—so as he was intently focusing on his nails, he said to me, "Well, I would really like to be a pacifist, Joanne, but I can't for moral reasons." "Moral reasons?" I squeaked, "That's *my* thing!" So he explained to me that you have to look at the consequences of your actions, and that there are situations in which a pacifist position means that not only will you die but other people might die as well. We had a furious argument about this but I recognized pretty quickly that I had been defeated, though it took me a few days to admit it. Nonetheless, to this day I retain a strong sympathy for non-violence, even though I've had fierce arguments with pacifists since that time.

TH: In the 1950s the pacifists were some of the only allies that the ISL had because most were opposed to both sides of the Cold War.

JL: Even now the War Resisters League are people we often agree with and work with. They're pacifists but we can agree that in a strategic sense that it's more often smarter to use non-violent means. Non-violent strategies and tactics are often helpful in terms of exposing the elite causes and sources of violence.

KW: Tom, were you radicalized in high school?

TH: Yes, but in an isolated sort of way. I had one or two friends whom I talked politics with, but when I opposed U.S. involvement in Vietnam in a high school debate around 1963 or '64, I was the only one. During my senior year in San Jose, I used to spend time with my best friend (who later joined the ISC) at a bookstore that had lots of Marxist and leftwing books and was owned by two friendly older women who must have been current or former members of the CP. The high school library happened to have Isaac Deutscher's anthology of Trotsky's writings, which I checked out. As

a result of reading Trotsky I started to think of myself as a Trotskyist. I arrived at Berkeley in the fall of 1966, looking for something to join.

KW: Did you pick Berkeley because of its radical reputation?

TH: I picked Berkeley because it was affordable—I was a California resident, and it was considered the best of the UC campuses. Even though I had radical ideas, they were pretty inconsistent. For example, I definitely considered myself a revolutionary socialist, yet I was very excited by Bob Scheer's antiwar campaign in the Democratic primary that summer.

KW: Joanne, you were at Berkeley by 1964. What was the campus like back then?

JL: For various reasons a number of us who had been active in YPSL ended up in the Bay Area in the early-to-mid 1960s—Mike Parker,[10] Joel Geier,[11] Sam Farber,[12] Mike Shute,[13] Kit and Lisa Lyons,[14] myself and a few others.

KW: Sy Landy?

JL: No, he was still in New York. Sy and I broke up in 1962 or 1963. We remained friendly. Getting divorced was a little difficult—New York State's laws were pretty archaic. But I found out that we could get our marriage annulled under two conditions: first, if we had been married for under three years, which we were, and, second, if someone would testify that before we were married they had heard Sy promise to support me financially and to have children, and that later, after we were married, that same person had conveniently been present when Sy said that he had never intended to do either. The divorce court was lined end to end with women and a family member or friend who supposedly witnessed such pre-wedding and post-wedding conversations. A real farce.

TH: Sy was a quintessential New Yorker, very much at home in NYC, and very likeable. Joel Geier used to say that Sy would never leave New York because he'd miss his delicatessen too much. He had a sly sense of humor; Sy once compared some pretentious little revolutionary sect to a flea floating down the river on its back with an erection shouting, "open the drawbridge!"

JL: We weren't close after the marriage ended but we were friendly. There's a funny story about this. At some point in the 1980s, I was one of the main speakers at a public meeting held at the Workmen's Circle in New York City in defense of Poland's Solidarnosc. Sy got up during the question-and-answer period and said that Solidarnosc was a bourgeois organization and that no self-respecting socialist should have anything to do with it. Afterwards he came up to me with his sly smile and said, "You know, you owe me a debt of gratitude." And I said, "Why is that?" And he said, "Well, I didn't say my name!" That's an example of his quick sense of humor.

After Sy and I broke up Mike Shute became my boyfriend. We visited Berkeley in August 1964 and it was hopping. It had campus radicalism, great weather. Mike decided to go to graduate school there, and I was really happy about that.

TH: There were lots of literature tables that various groups set up on campus, and people would hang around for hours talking about politics. It was an incredible scene. Every day people would stand around and argue for hours and hours. And after the tables were taken down, they would move to The Terrace, behind Sproul Plaza, and continue discussing things over coffee for hours more.

The Independent Socialist Club

KW: When did you decide to join the Independent Socialist Club (ISC) in Berkeley?

JL: I helped to form it in the fall of 1964, shortly before the Free Speech Movement was born. Hal Draper,[15] Ernie Haberkern,[16] David and Mike Friedman, Mike Parker, Joel Geier, Kit and Lisa Lyons, and a number of other people who had been active in the Independent Socialist League or the leftwing of the YPSL decided to launch the ISC in the fall of 1964. The YPSL leftwing was defined by its "third camp" politics—"Neither Washington nor Moscow"—and by its opposition to supporting the Democratic Party. The YPSL right wing followed Max Shachtman, who had earlier advocated for the third camp and independent political action, but who by the early 1960s had become pro-West and for entry into the Democratic Party.

The ISC got off the ground pretty quickly, and played an important role in the Free Speech Movement—Hal Draper and Jack Weinberg,[17] for example, were leading figures in the FSM.

KW: Did the ISC view the Free Speech Movement as a recruiting ground?

JL: That wasn't the focus or the mentality, though we did recruit dozens of people in those years. The ISC was an organic part of the FSM, and the student movement in general. We recruited out of the movement but we were also part of the movement. We probably had 60-70 members in the Bay Area by the mid-1960s, many of whom were highly active in student politics.

Tom Harrison, back row, center; Joanne Landy, second row, right

KW: Was Hal Draper the group's leader?

TH: He was a central figure because of his writings, and he often gave talks and spoke at rallies. We always got a good turnout whenever he spoke. He also took part in a debate with Sociology professor Nathan Glazer about the Free Speech Movement that attracted hundreds of people.

JL: But he was not the central player from an organizational perspective. Joel Geier and Mike Parker were key in terms of maintaining the group on a daily basis. Geier and Draper would often confer.

KW: Phyllis and Julius Jacobson suggested that Draper was something of a paradox—he could be remote, but he also was a beloved figure among younger radicals.[18] Jack Weinberg, for example, famously said, "Don't trust anyone over 30—except Hal Draper."

TH: He was just a brilliant guy. And while he was an inspiring speaker, he also spent time talking with people. I remember going on a hike with him and his wife Anne and a bunch of others on Mount

Tamalpais. Once he told me I should learn German and dedicate myself to the history of the early years of the Third International. He could be intimidating, and he wasn't warm or cuddly. I heard that he greeted people by saying, "and how are you justifying your existence?" He was a big wine aficionado—did you know that? He knew a tremendous amount about California wines.

JL: And he organized square dances! He definitely socialized with people.

TH: But he maintained a certain distance. He and Anne weren't expansive and embracing like Phyllis and Julius Jacobson, who would frequently invite us over for dinner and holidays, invite us to stay at their vacation home upstate, and so on.

JL: The Drapers were much older than most of us, but they weren't anti-social. I wrote my senior thesis at Berkeley on the ideas of Lenin and Luxemburg, and Hal spent many hours helping me with it. The Drapers were always friendly with me, but some people may have had different experiences. Whenever I called Hal, and said, "How are you?" there was silence on the other end. Finally, one day I said, "Hal, why aren't you saying something?" He said, "Well, the question is just a formality." And I said, "Hal, it's a conversation stopper if you don't say anything. You need to say 'fine' or 'not bad' or something." He said, "Really? OK." After that he would always say, "fine" whenever I asked him how he was. Who says you can't teach an old dog new tricks?

KW: Mario Savio, the leader of the Free Speech Movement, seems to have been the right person at the right time.

JL: Very sweet and very smart. The Free Speech Movement was much bigger than anything I'd ever seen before—it was an engulfing moment. It was a revolution, but on a single campus. It bore a kinship to what I had read about the Russian Revolution, but on a smaller scale of course. You saw authority crumble, you saw the students win their demands, you saw different sectors of the students and faculty come over to our side. There were setbacks and pauses, and times when we vigorously debated how to respond to one problem or another. In the end, we won. It was invigorating and educational.

TH: When I was an undergraduate at Berkeley there was a student strike almost every quarter, it seemed. I actually went to very few classes. I was reading a lot, but not necessarily what was required for my classes.

Just to give you a sense of the times, there was a sit-in a couple of months after my arriving on campus, which I rushed to join. It was around a Naval ROTC table in the Student Union—as a non-student group they were allowed to recruit there while the non-student *political* groups weren't. I didn't get arrested, but a few people, including Mario Savio, did. That led to a strike. Before that, in September I think, I was attending a rally at Sproul Plaza and a young woman came up to me with a piece of cardboard that was filled with political buttons. One of the buttons said, "I wouldn't vote for [Edmund] Brown even if he ran against Ronald Reagan." This was prior to the California gubernatorial election, which Reagan won.

And this was Joanne. She asked me if I'd like to buy this button, and I said, "No, but I would like to buy a button with a picture of Karl Marx," which she said she had. So we had a conversation that lasted several hours on the steps of Sproul Plaza.

JL: We went through all the big issues—the Russian Revolution, Stalinism, the Cold War.

KW: Who were some of your favorite professors?

TH: Carl Schorske, Larry Levine, Reginald Zelnick in History, and Mike Rogin in the Political

Science department.

JL: Mike Rogin was close to the ISC, in fact. All of these people we've named were part of the pro-student wing of the faculty. They didn't take part in the sit-ins but they played an active supporting role. William Kornhauser, Philip Selznick in Sociology, Sheldon Wolin in Political Science.

TH: Right. But there were some real trolls, too—Martin Malia, who was a great historian but a terrible reactionary. Gerald Feldman was another, a specialist in German history. He absolutely hated the student movement, and there was a rumor that he carried a blackjack in his pocket. One night there was a fire at Wheeler Auditorium, and I was with Joanne, and Feldman was there and accused Joanne of being to blame.

JL: And I said, "What the hell are you talking about?"

KW: Nathan Glazer was another critic of the student movement, although his approach was much more low-key.

JL: There's a funny story about Hal Draper and Nathan Glazer. We—the ISC branch—had decided to organize a debate about the Free Speech Movement after the FSM had won. And we wanted to invite Glazer to represent the liberal position. Glazer's view was that the FSM's use of civil disobedience was illegitimate. Draper's position was that the FSM needed radical means and radical leaders to win even liberal goals—and that without radicals taking the lead the Free Speech Movement would have never succeeded.

So I phoned Glazer and invited him to participate in this debate. And Glazer, who was well aware of Draper's debating prowess, said, "I'll get slaughtered." So I said, "Don't say yes or no right away, but take some time to think it over. Let me call you back in a couple of days."

And I called him back a couple of days later, and he said, "Joanne, I'm not suicidal. I'm not going to do this." I told him, "If you don't do it, we're going to have to ask Professor William Petersen to do it." "Oh no!" he said, aghast, because he knew that this would discredit his side of the debate. I said, "Why don't you think about it some more? Let me call you back in a couple of days." Eventually he said, "OK, but I'm going to regret this for the rest of my life." The debate finally happened, and of course he got slaughtered.

KW: Did ISC members listen to rock music? Did the men grow their hair long?

TH: We certainly weren't hippies, but there was long hair, short hair – there was no sense whatsoever of a dress code in the ISC. Lots of people smoked dope, went to rock concerts, and so on. It was all very porous. And of course that was a glorious time and Berkeley was a glorious place for popular culture. Bands such as Big Brother and the Holding Company and Jefferson Airplane sometimes played for free in the parks. Janis Joplin was just mind-blowing. Right after my freshman year was the "Human Be-In" and afterwards the "Summer of Love."

JL: And we were all affected by what was going on around us, including the music. But there were arguments—we would argue with people over what might be described today as "anti-politics." We didn't think that dropping out or building communes would lead to the revolution. But we were part of the sixties culture.

Socialist Horizons

KW: In the mid-1960s the ISC is growing and the anti-Vietnam war movement is gaining traction. Did you think that a socialist transformation might be on the horizon?

TH: No. We never thought that socialist revolution was imminent. Never.

JL: But we were excited about the antiwar movement, and we were also excited about how the ISC was doing. We had an optimistic and enthusiastic feeling, but we weren't living under the illusion that socialism was around the corner. We tried to be sober about these things. But on the other hand the group gained members and established new chapters in the late 1960s—there was a definite sense of momentum.

KW: When did your optimism peak?

TH: 1968 of course was the most exciting year. It was worldwide. France, Czechoslovakia. If you think about what took place in France it is almost unbelievable—workers and students united, the government shaken to its foundations, our dream come true.

JL: There was a vibrant if not unproblematic student movement, and antiwar movement, here in the United States. You didn't have to believe that we would soon be following in France's footsteps to be hopeful. It's perhaps easier for people who lived through this period to retain a sense of optimism than it might be for people who didn't experience the sixties firsthand.

KW: My impression is that the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) was not much of a factor at Berkeley.

TH: It was there—it had a presence—but it never amounted to much, mainly because it was so faction-ridden and full of internal bickering.

JL: It wasn't hegemonic in the way it was on some campuses. Also, by the time that SDS was on the scene there was already a well-established campus left that had a strong sense of itself. And to some degree Berkeley is in its own world. It's not that we didn't know about what was going on at Harvard or Columbia, but Berkeley's New Left was unique.

KW: And when did you start to think, "Oh no, this is starting to smell bad."

TH: 1969. Things started to get very dire—Weathermen, Progressive Labor…

JL: And SDS split apart.

TH: Maoism in this country really got going around 1969-1970. Bob Avakian is part of this story of course, and he was in the Bay Area.[19]

JL: Bob Avakian's father, Spurgeon Avakian, was a judge, and in fact he presided at my second wedding, to Nelson Lichtenstein.[20] A while after Mike and I broke up in the late sixties I began to see Nelson, also a history PhD student at UC Berkeley. We lived together and then got married. Nelson and I moved to New York in 1975—he couldn't find a job in the academy, so he moved here to work at Facts on File. Tom moved to New York a few months after we did.

TH: Nelson is a very warm person, generous and full of enthusiasm, and he's been an outstanding labor historian for many years. His first book, which was based on his dissertation, was profoundly shaped by his time around the ISC. When I moved to New York to attend grad school at Columbia, Nelson gave me some writing work at Facts on File, where he was an editor, providing badly needed income to supplement my measly fellowship.

JL: The ISC changed dramatically in the early 1970s, however. It was larger in numbers, and had already decided to rename itself the International Socialists in 1969. There was a sharp turn toward

industry, which meant placing members in key industrial sectors such as auto and steel. The group became "harder" as a result—this wouldn't have necessarily followed, but it did. Draper initially supported the policy of industrialization but didn't agree with the way in which it was implemented, and he dropped out of the organization in 1971.

TH: By the way, we very much agreed with Draper about the recklessness with which the IS tried to turn itself into a workers' party.

JL: I wasn't against the general strategy of industrialization—Hal and Anne actually were the ones who convinced me of its merits. But I was not in favor of the manner in which it was done, and the things that went along with it. I wasn't in favor of shaming people who for whatever reason weren't ready to take the plunge. I wasn't in favor of ignoring the gains we had made and could still make on college campuses. And I wasn't in favor of the idea that we had become a "pre-party" formation, and that we were on the way to building the revolutionary party.

TH: What we needed was a few more years to build a healthy third camp tendency.

KW: Tom, you didn't come out as a gay man while you were at Berkeley.

TH: Oh no, that was much later. I was very confused—it was personal and it's hard to describe or explain. I didn't know. Plus, this was before Gay Liberation—before 1969, I mean—and the atmosphere in the ISC did not seem friendly to homosexuality. It was a subtle thing; there was no formal sanction on being gay, as there was in some of the sects. On the contrary, after Stonewall the IS responded quickly to Gay Liberation by adopting an excellent position on gay rights, and the atmosphere improved a great deal. But before 1969 there were the occasional (private) sneers and jokes about homosexuals, and, to me at least, there was a sense that gays were merely tolerated. I certainly felt intimidated, but I can't blame that for my confusion, which had much more to do with my own anxieties than anything about the organization.

I think it's hard now to recall how natural it was in those days for straights—including socialists—to treat gays as at best neurotic and embarrassing and at worst disgusting. After all, it wasn't until 1973 that the American Psychiatric Association declared that homosexuality was not a mental illness. And psychiatric orthodoxy, Freudianism, etc., was widely accepted among the comrades.

JL. I'm horrified to learn that anyone in the ISC was making such degrading, coarse jokes and sneers.

The International Socialists

KW: The IS was launched in 1969; Hal Draper joins the organization but leaves in 1971. Were you part of a factional grouping within the IS during this period?

TH: Joanne, Mike Shute, and Charlie Capper were not quite a faction but they were…

JL: We were a tendency—with a small-t—of like-minded people. We didn't draw organizational lines that you could or couldn't cross.

KW: But your opposition to calling for a National Liberation Front (NLF) victory in Vietnam helped bring you together.

JL: That was the main issue. We formed a "third camp tendency" a few months before we were expelled from the Berkeley IS in January 1972. Tom was a member but he wasn't expelled, because he was living in Seattle at the time.

KW: Is opposition to an NLF victory a policy you support in retrospect? I assume that by this point the radical wing of the anti-Vietnam War movement actively favored an NLF victory.

JL: The ISC had always maintained a third camp position on the question of the Vietnam War. After the Tet Offensive, however, Draper argued that the group should support the military victory of the NLF on the grounds that the NLF had become the de facto government, so it had become a question of national self-determination. Mike Shute and I and others continued to support what we believed to be the consistent third camp position, and we made our case in a leaflet that we distributed at an antiwar demonstration in 1971, which led to our expulsion in January of the following year.

TH: The "third camp tendency" consisted of a small group of IS members: Joanne and myself, Mike Shute, Charlie Capper, Lois Weiner,[21] Nelson Lichtenstein, Bruce and Cynthia Novack, and one or two others. Draper had written this long piece on self-determination in which he made his case for military support to the NLF, while our group coalesced around the third camp position. Joanne wrote a response to Draper's piece that was also quite lengthy. Some of the same questions arise today in relation to, say, Iraq and Syria. We argued that one could unequivocally call for unilateral U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam without supporting the NLF; today we oppose U.S. military intervention in the Middle East but also oppose regimes like those of Saddam Hussein or Bashar al-Assad.

KW: Let's suppose the organizers of a demonstration issue four demands, and one of the demands is victory to the NLF. Would you encourage people to skip the demonstration?

JL: It's always a question of degree. Similar questions came up with protests over the Iraq war. If it was a demonstration organized by ANSWER, then their support for Saddam Hussein became a prominent part of the demonstration, and I myself wouldn't attend such a protest.[22] But if it's part of the mix I'm not going to be happy, but I go. And if I have the time, and courage, and wit to say something or carry a third camp sign, then I'll do that.

TH: People who are involved in ANSWER support all kinds of dictators—not only Saddam Hussein, but Assad in Syria, Kim Il-Jung in North Korea, and so on. But most people who join a march organized by ANSWER aren't necessarily aware of the group's hideous politics.

JL: An example of this came up last weekend. There was an anti-NATO demonstration where nothing was said about Putin, Assad, Ukraine, and so on. A supporter of the Campaign for Peace and Democracy urged people to attend the march even though he wasn't endorsing it. I probably would have gone if I could have but I'm not completely certain about that. There's not a single formula we can use to decide these things. It's on a spectrum.

KW: Were there antiwar activists who tuned you out once they learned about your position on the NLF?

TH: It was an unpopular position, that's for sure—and still is!

JL: It seemed to us that the IS people felt relieved that they no longer had to defend this unpopular position. They gave military support to the NLF but not political support, but you didn't hear much about their political criticisms.

KW: The U.S. Socialist Workers Party also opposed the "victory to the NLF" demand. Their position was, "Bring the Troops Home Now." Is that where you ended up?

TH: Of course we supported the demand of Bring the Troops Home Now, but we also emphasized the question of independent political action. And in practice this differentiated us from the SWP and their youth group the YSA. The SWP danced around the issue of the Democratic Party and its role

vis-à-vis the antiwar movement. Meanwhile, they would run their own sectarian electoral campaigns.

JL: Although the SWP had its own speakers advocating a vote for its own candidates, it avoided including non-SWP speakers, such as from the new Peace and Freedom Party, who advocated independence from and no support to the Democratic Party at their rallies and demonstrations. I would never insist that an antiwar demonstration be built around a call for independent political action, or that liberal politicians be excluded as speakers. But I would want to make sure that the independent political action position was represented on the speakers' platform.

Expulsion and Beyond

KW: But why did the IS expel you over this question of support for the NLF? Why wasn't this something that could be debated within the organization?

JL: It could be debated. We were expelled because we passed out a leaflet with our point of view at an antiwar demonstration, even though the leaflet said clearly that we were a minority tendency in the IS.

TH: We had "violated discipline." And this was at a time when the IS was trying to transform itself into a more disciplined organization.

JL: The leadership said that we could make the case for our position in the group's journal, but that we couldn't pass out our own leaflet at a public event. They insisted that Lenin and the Bolsheviks would never have allowed it. We responded by pointing out that we weren't experiencing another 1917, that the stakes were not quite as high, and that in fact the Bolsheviks were often rather looser in their approach to discipline. We also predicted that our expulsion was going to be the beginning of a process of the organization enduring more and more splits and expulsions in the future.

On a related point, Mike Shute had an excellent piece of advice, which we did our best to adhere to—he said, let's make this the friendliest split in the history of the left. We realized that despite our expulsion these were the people that we were closest to politically, so why not try to get along? In this we succeeded; in fact, we are friendly to this day with people who voted for or supported our expulsion, and often collaborate with them.

TH: The judge at our "trial" was Sam Farber, a brilliant analyst of the Cuban Stalinist regime, a longtime friend of the Campaign for Peace and Democracy, and a personal friend.

JL: For a long time, whenever Sam came in the room we'd say, "Here comes the judge!"

KW: If your group had said, "We've made a mistake, you were right," they would have taken you back.

JL: Oh yeah. They regretted, as they saw it, having to drive us out. It was…peculiar. And we weren't at all eager to leave the organization, but we weren't willing to remain under the conditions the majority insisted on.

KW: After you left IS you formed a group called "Socialists for Independent Politics." What did you hope to accomplish?

JL: Just to hold things together. To get some ideas down on paper.

KW: Why didn't you leave with Draper?

TH: Because we didn't agree with his organizational proposals—turning the group into a mere editorial board plus supporters—and we felt that he was soft on the union bureaucracy.

KW: Nevertheless, Draper's departure must have been a little discouraging.

TH: Yes, but I think that Draper himself had become discouraged. The fiasco of the Cleaver campaign for president in 1968, on the Peace and Freedom Party ticket, definitely played a part in this. He had been a big proponent of both Peace and Freedom, and, at first, the Cleaver ticket. But Cleaver made a farce out of the entire campaign. With a different candidate and a serious, broader campaign, Peace and Freedom might have picked up a lot of Eugene McCarthy's supporters after the Democratic convention, I think, because there were thousands of angry young McCarthy supporters who hated Humphrey and didn't know where to turn, and because the idea of a genuinely antiwar party had a certain appeal at the time. After that, Draper really became sour on organizational issues.

JL: He reacted correctly, I think, against some of the wild-eyed "struggle group" ideas—that rank and file militants should leave the existing unions and build new working class organizations to replace them—that were floating around the IS at the time. On the other hand he was skating toward a generalized defense of the labor bureaucracy. We didn't really agree with either position.

TH: In addition, the tone of the Draper group was very different from our tone. We tried to be friendly. Their approach was the opposite. They were contemptuous, arrogant, and hostile in their dealing with the IS majority.

JL: But we also tried to maintain good relationships with the folks around Draper.

KW: Did it take you a few years to adjust to not being in an organization?

JL: It's true that ever since then I've felt a little sorry not to have an organization like the ISC was before it changed—radical, democratic, third campish, and looser than the IS became in the 1970s. A small group of determined people can make a difference, especially if you have good ideas. As socialist independents, we've worked alongside small socialist groups—Solidarity, for example, as well as the International Socialist Organization (ISO), and the Democratic Socialists of American (DSA). We've been involved in politics for quite a few years without being in a formal group, so we've gotten used to it. The Campaign for Peace and Democracy has provided a way of promoting third camp ideas without having to belong to any particular socialist organization.

KW: Before we talk more about the Campaign, could you both say something about the shock of moving from the West Coast to New York City in the mid-1970s.

TH: There were times when I wondered whether I had made a big mistake. This was 1975. The city was in terrible shape. It looked bad, and it felt scary. It actually smelled bad. I arrived in the summer and it was just hideous.

KW: George Orwell here.

TH: I was starting grad school at Columbia, in History. I never finished my Ph.D., however. I received a fellowship to study in Paris in 1978, and ended up staying longer than I had expected—a year and a half—because I liked it so much. My advisor was Robert Paxton, whose path-breaking book on Vichy France had come out just three years before I came to Columbia and caused a huge sensation in France. He was an outstanding scholar, dignified and extremely erudite, and very principled. I returned to New York in 1980 and was at loose ends. I found a job at the Brearley School, a private girl's school in Manhattan, and I've been teaching there ever since.

KW: When did you join the *New Politics* editorial board?

JL: My former husband Sy Landy and I had worked on the magazine when we were living in New York City in the early 1960s. Sy was on the editorial board for a few years, and I wasn't. The sexist exclusion wasn't just about me—Julie [Julius] was editor, and his wife Phyllis wasn't even though she was actually co-editor. The exclusion was completely unconscious.

Even after I moved to Berkeley in 1964 we sold the magazine at ISC tables and events. *New Politics* was starting to wind down in the mid-1970s but the magazine revived in 1986, and Tom and I have both been active as contributors and editors of this second series of the magazine.

We did maintain a Socialists for Independent Politics discussion group for several years. We met at Cynthia Novack and Dick Bull's (her second husband) apartment every couple of months or so. Cynthia and Dick were dancers and their apartment was also a dance studio. Draper spoke to our group when he was in town. There were eight or ten of us, and another ten or fifteen people would turn up. We weren't a formal organization but it was a way to keep our politics alive. We even published a mimeographed bulletin.

TH: We had an interesting discussion about the 1980 Barry Commoner campaign, as I recall. And some of us were active in the campaign.

Solidarnosc

KW: Solidarnosc, the independent trade union in Poland, was launched in 1980, and the Campaign for Peace and Democracy/East and West was formed a couple of years later to help promote ties between democratic labor, peace and human rights activists across Cold War lines.

JL: I remember quite vividly how the group got started. Arthur Lipow was visiting New York, and Solidarnosc had just gotten underway in Poland.[23] In his typical manner he said, "Joanne, you *must* do something about this. This is a historic opportunity for our politics and you just *have* to organize something." I have to give him credit—he was right.

A small group of us then met in my apartment – Gail Daneker, Judy Hempfling, Chris Meagher, Sam Farber, Gabe Gabrielsky, Mel Bienenfeld, and a couple of others. Gail had come from the world of left-leaning NGOs, and she was the person who knew that we would need a board of directors, and that we would need to file the paperwork in order to claim nonprofit status. She also encouraged us to reach out to folks like Ed Asner, Paul Sweezy, Seymour Melman, Erika Munk, Pete Seeger—people from outside our existing circle of contacts, in other words. We also got in touch with Mike Harrington, Barbara Garson, and David McReynolds, whom I had known from past activities. In addition, we made a point of making sure that we involved people who had been in and around the Communist Party but who were shaken up by the struggles that were taking place in countries like Poland. It was easy to attract the support of people who already had third camp politics, but we worked hard to reach beyond the traditional third camp milieu.

KW: Were you thinking that this was broadly analogous to the crisis within the Communist world that erupted in 1956-1957, as a result of the Hungarian revolt and the Khrushchev revelations about Stalin?

JL: Maybe we should have but I don't remember thinking in those terms.

TH: We didn't anticipate anything quite so cosmic. We just knew that Poland was in turmoil.

JL: In 1980 it was just Poland. We wanted to get people talking about the importance of independent

trade unions in so-called workers' states, and toward that end we organized a couple of well-attended public events in New York. And in fact, we hadn't expected these events to attract as many people as they did. We organized a public meeting with something like twenty speakers at Washington Irving High School, and after that there was a big event at the Town Hall that was mainly organized by Ralph Schoenman.

These events helped bring together a core group of people, many of whom came out of third camp politics. But it wasn't limited to third camp socialists—Gail, for example, wasn't a socialist but was a Green. She didn't like the idea of nationalizing practically anything. But she was pro-labor and had worked for a group called Environmentalists for Full Employment, so she came out of a small-d democratic background. Steve Becker was another pro-labor green who worked closely with the Campaign.

KW: Women have played a central leadership role in the Campaign from the beginning. Were you thinking that peace groups had been mostly dominated by men and that you needed a more feminist approach to these issues?

JL: I had been a leading member of the ISC, and for a short period the IS, and of course a woman, but I never thought about the question of leadership from a feminist perspective until years later. Gail and I were both feminists, and we were the Campaign's leading members, but we didn't think about the Campaign as a women-led movement.

TH: I never thought about it either.

JL: But now that you mention it…

KW: Who were the most interesting speakers at your early events?

JL: Harrington comes to mind. He quite liked what we were up to, i.e., the broadness of our approach. We weren't close friends, and had many disagreements, but he was a friendly kind of person.

TH: Daniel Singer was an inspiring speaker and very close to us.

KW: What made you decide to create an actual organization?

JL: Well, we had organized a couple of big events, and we wanted to build on our success. We officially launched CPD/EW in 1982 with a dinner at Sardi's. Adam Hochschild came to the dinner, and he later joined our board.

KW: You must have spent hours setting up the organization—tax forms, post office forms, and so on. Did any other ISC/IS spin-offs go in this NGO direction?

TH: *Labor Notes* and Teamsters for a Democratic Union both come to mind. But our focus on foreign policy was distinctive.

KW: The NGO model of organization offered certain advantages—it's much easier to raise foundation money if you have a 501(c)(3) status, for example.

JL: Even individuals. If you want gifts to be tax deductible you need that 501(c)(3) status. I never even knew about this until Gail laid it all out. The problem with the term "NGO" is that it has a bad odor for some people—there are definitely NGOs out there that exist simply in order to keep themselves afloat.

KW: How would you describe the Campaign?

JL: As an advocacy group—a third camp advocacy organization. We were radical democrats who opposed the elite-driven foreign policy of the United States and supported social justice, democracy and freedom from great power domination everywhere.

KW: What was it like working with Ed Asner?

JL: "Work with" is a little bit of an exaggeration. He signed our first ad in the *New York Times*, "U.S. Peace and Labor activists defend Polish Solidarnosc on Trial," which appeared on April 10, 1983, and he came with us later when we went to the Polish Embassy to protest repression against Solidarnosc. We had sent out a press release, but there didn't seem to be any press in the vicinity as we gathered our group outside the embassy, but when Ed showed up suddenly there were press photographers everywhere, sprouting up like mushrooms after the rain. Another big name was the writer Ariel Dorfman, whom Tom mentioned. He also has joined many of our protests and petitions.

Building the Campaign

TH: In some ways the most important people who worked with us were from Europe—E.P. Thompson, for example, as well as folks from Eastern Europe.

KW: Were European leftists were generally more willing to criticize the Soviet Union, and Soviet-style states in Eastern Europe, than U.S. leftists, many of whom clung to the perspective that the enemy of our enemy is our friend?

TH: It certainly seemed that way. There was less interest in the Solidarnosc movement in the U.S. than there seemed to be in Europe. Also, Europeans felt under the gun because of the military buildup that was taking place. There was genuine grassroots concern about what both the Americans and the Soviets were up to so far as nuclear weapons were concerned.

JL: The Campaign helped encourage the major U.S. peace organizations to reach out to independent peace activists in the Soviet bloc. The Fellowship of Reconciliation, War Resisters League, Sojourners, the nuclear freeze campaign, and the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), as well as local peace groups around the country—they all became more interested in and supportive of independent movements in Eastern Europe as a result of our efforts. This also applied to leading individuals in the peace movement, such as Randy Forsberg and Pam Solo. To say that we worked closely with them might be an overstatement, but people from these groups supported our campaigns, came to our events, and sometimes spoke at them. That was one of the big accomplishments of the Campaign. The tendency of the big peace groups had been to avoid having anything to do with independent activists from places like Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union out of concern for legitimizing U.S. militarism. This started to change as a result of our efforts to show that opposing the U.S. war machine and supporting democratic rights in the Soviet bloc could actually strengthen both causes. The U.S. Peace Council would have nothing to do with us, of course, because they really were pro-Soviet.

Our position was quite simple. We were not demanding that the peace movement make a complete break with people who were soft on the Soviet question. So for example, if a group such as the AFSC or the Fellowship of Reconciliation went to Moscow, we would encourage them to meet with independent people, and we wouldn't denounce them for meeting the leaders of the official peace groups, even though we believed and said that these official groups weren't genuine anti-war organizations since they condemned only the U.S. and not the Soviet Union.

TH: E.P. Thompson played a crucial role in all of this. He really encouraged peace activists in Britain as well as Western Europe and the United States to search for counterparts in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, and to help them in any way that we could. His writings were critically important in terms of taking on the theories that were used to justify the Cold War and nuclear deterrence, making the case for a nuclear free world and for building a peace movement that was genuinely independent of both the West and the Soviet bloc. He was also an incredibly electrifying speaker.

JL: Thompson was the person who developed the intellectual framework for the idea of *détente* from below. Of course, when we read about his ideas they fit perfectly with the politics that we had already had, but he put it in new language and from a fresh perspective. The fact that he was an ex-CP person himself was also important.

KW: The ice was cracking.

TH: There *was* a parallel with 1956 in that you could begin to see the possibility of a real embodiment of the third camp ideal. Here was this peace movement in the West with major components consciously committed to building bridges with independent peace activists in Eastern Europe. There was a point in the 1980s when it seemed as if there was a common struggle that united people across the Cold War divide—a struggle that was against U.S. foreign policy, about the placement of missiles on European soil, but that was also against authoritarian rule in the Soviet bloc. It was very exciting.

KW: When does Christopher Hitchens enter this story?

JL: *There* was a vivid personality! And he really did work closely with the Campaign until he broke with us over Bosnia. He came with a group of us when we went to Czechoslovakia; he organized a public meeting for the Campaign in Washington, D.C.; he spoke at many of our events, including the big one-day conferences. The first inkling that I had that there was an emerging divergence between us was in the early 1990s, when we were talking about the United Nations. I was making the point that it is a top-down organization in which the great powers make the crucial decisions. And he said, "Well, it's run by the victors of World War Two and that's pretty good."

TH: The big turning point for him, as Joanne noted, was Yugoslavia, when he came out in favor of a NATO intervention in Bosnia in 1994.

KW: Whereas the Campaign's position was that the international embargo against Bosnia should have been lifted, so that they could defend themselves.

TH: I ended up writing a great deal about Bosnia, and spoke at quite a few events. At one point I, along with Steve Shalom, took part in a public debate with Michael Walzer and Bogdan Denitch on the question of U.S. and NATO intervention in Bosnia. It was actually broadcast on cable TV, on a show called "Perspectives from the Left."

Détente from Below

KW: The Campaign initially focused on developments in Eastern Europe. What made you decide to expand your focus to encompass Latin America, the Near and Middle East, and so on?

JL: It's not exactly true that we initially focused on Eastern Europe to the exclusion of other areas of the world. Even at the beginning we were interested in countries within the Western "camp," such as Turkey, the Philippines, in Latin America, etc. One of the most important things we did was to enlist Eastern European intellectuals and trade union activists to sign statements opposing U.S. policy towards Nicaragua and Chile. International solidarity—independent of and in defiance of the superpowers—was baked into the Campaign from the beginning.

TH: That was the point. We were trying to break down bipolar, Cold War-type thinking.

JL: We never imagined that we could address every issue around the world. For a long time, our focus was on Eastern Europe and Latin America.

TH: Even at our first all-day conference we included a panel on Tibet. Other panels I recall were on Kashmir, and the EU with John Palmer. We did events about the Kurds. The goal was to encourage solidarity from below, and to bring together democratic, peace, and trade union activists in a way that was genuinely independent of Cold War thinking.

KW: What was it like to have been heavily involved in Eastern European solidarity activism, and then for the Soviet bloc to fall apart in a few short years?

TH: It was a big surprise. Everybody says that, and it's true. Despite all of the warning signs, none of us expected it. The system may have been disintegrating, but it seemed like it would never end. When the end came, it was thrilling. We had high hopes, which sadly were not realized. And so we had to adjust to a new set of realities. Joanne wrote a series of very effective essays about shock therapy and so on.

JL: I was in Poland in 1989, and it was clear that things were not moving in a socialist direction. Some of the activists that I knew were still holding onto a radical sensibility but other people who had come out of leftwing anti-Stalinist politics were beginning to think and sound like typical Western politicians. I remember going to a meeting after 1989 at Helsinki Watch in New York where Adam Michnik gave a presentation. He had recently been elected to parliament, and I asked him why he hadn't told voters that his party was planning to close many of the Gdansk shipyards. He said that they hadn't expected to get elected so that's why they hadn't spelled out their program. I followed up by saying, well, once you were elected and you were going to begin to take action, don't you think you should have consulted the Polish people again, and asked for some kind of support for your plans? He didn't reply.

So you can imagine how devastating it was to see people who had been grassroots activists suddenly become the shock troops for neoliberalism. I don't think that what happened was inevitable. But it was a reflection of the weakness of the global left that the only thing that seemed like an alternative to the Communist regimes was the capitalist system. Anyway, by the summer of '89 I was very depressed about the pro-capitalist direction developments in Eastern Europe were taking, even though I of course welcomed the end of Russian domination and one-party dictatorship.

TH: This was at a time when Reaganism, Thatcherism, and neoliberalism were absolutely hegemonic. The left was at its very weakest.

JL: And on the whole, the left in the West was very reluctant to extend its support to the struggles of dissidents and ordinary people in Eastern Europe in initiatives such as Solidarnosc in Poland and Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia. The people who were actually on the ground, offering support, were from the National Endowment for Democracy, the AFL-CIO, and others who supported U.S. imperial foreign policy aims. And their support came with all kinds of conditions. It wasn't that individual dissidents were corrupt or greedy—most of the people we knew in Poland, for example, were dedicated small-d democratic activists. Many had embraced democratic socialist ideals in their youth and were broadly egalitarian in their outlook. But the system they were living under collapsed at a time when it seemed like the only option on the table was market capitalism. Progressive and left movements in the West were not only weak; they were generally uninterested in offering the East Europeans a different path as they ended the Communist system.

TH: Many of the people we're talking about came of age during the 1960s, when the left was relatively strong and hopes were high. And it went downhill from that point on. It was tragic.

KW: What are some of the lessons of the Campaign? What kinds of initiatives worked and what kinds didn't?

TH: We got a lot of things right, in my view. For example, the work we did in the 1980s around dissidents and movements from below in Eastern Europe, like the work we did around Bosnia in the 1990s, was unusual on the radical left for its emphasis on the issue of democracy, including the democratic right of peoples to self-determination.

JL: It's important to emphasize that the Campaign was and is a specific type of group. It's not a membership organization. The projects that we undertook were related to how we were organized. We were always a small, self-organized group that wrote statements, sponsored public meetings, and so forth. We started with Poland, and a lot of people continued to associate us with the work we did around Solidarnosc, and Central and Eastern Europe more generally. Our approach then was to build ties between grassroots activists in the West and dissidents in the East—*détente* from below, in other words.

And over time we were able to attract support from prominent individuals in the peace movement who proved willing to sign statements of support for Solidarnosc and other grassroots movements in Eastern Europe. Peace groups had traditionally stayed away from taking a critical stand on anything having to do with the Soviet bloc, and were often willing to meet with official peace groups from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, validating the idea that they were actual counterparts to our own independent peace organizations. Our efforts had an impact in terms of helping people move beyond the Cold War framework: even though some peace groups continued to meet with government-controlled groups from the Eastern bloc, they frequently challenged authorities on their repression of independent groups and met with independent groups as well.

My first trip to the region was in 1981, the year of the U.S. Professional Air Traffic Controllers

Organization (PATCO) strike. I recall that vividly. Since I was respecting the strike by not flying from a U.S. airport, I took a train to Montreal and flew from there to Warsaw on LOT Polish airlines. When I got to Warsaw, I went into the LOT ticket office to arrange details of my return flight. I was wearing my "Support PATCO Strikers" button, and the staff spontaneously shouted out their approval.

KW: What was it like to visit Warsaw in this period?

JL: It was thrilling. The atmosphere in the building where Solidarnosc was meeting was electric. There were meetings of all sorts going on simultaneously—steelworkers, journalists, academics. People were rushing up and down the stairs with papers, coffee, etc. It reminded me of the heady days in Berkeley, California, when I was active in the Free Speech Movement in 1964.

KW: Was your hotel room bugged?

JL: I assumed that it might be, so I was cautious in what I said. When I met with Solidarnosc people in their homes, if a sensitive topic came up they would point to the ceiling and twirl their index finger in a circle to indicate that we were likely being bugged, at which point we would just write down key points of our conversation and show the paper to one another.

KW: Were you followed from the airport?

JL: I don't know. I wasn't aware of being followed from the airport, but once, a few years later, when I was in Gdansk, I met with one of the women who had been active in the Gdansk shipyard strike that sparked the birth of Solidarnosc as an independent trade union. As we walked through the streets she said, "Well, you know, they're following us"—I hadn't noticed a thing—and she took me through a couple of crowded department stores, where we'd go in one set of doors and leave by another that exited onto another street.

TH: When I visited members of the Trust Group in Moscow in the 1980s they didn't even write things down on paper—they used those erasable pads with cellophane, so that anything they wrote down could be immediately erased.

KW: How did you know whom to work with?

TH: It was usually pretty obvious, because these were the people who were leading members of democratic movements, whether they were organized around issues of peace, labor rights, or whatever.

JL: Helsinki Watch helped us identify some people, but as far back as the early 1960s we were in touch with various radicals in Eastern Europe. Back in Berkeley there was a fellow named Witold Jedlicki who had been hidden by the family of Jan-Jósef Lipski during World War II. As a result, he was a close friend of Lipski, who became a leading member of the KOR group of intellectuals that helped advise Solidarnosc in its early phase. The first time I went to Poland I was able to meet Lipski. There was a Solidarnosc conference going on at the time and I was able to attend the conference and met a lot of interesting people as a result. At a later point an independent peace group called Freedom and Peace was organized in Poland and they were particularly keen to establish links with groups like ours in the west. Their leader, Jacek Czaputowicz, was in and out of jail in the 1980s, and I visited with him very shortly after he had been released from jail. He was a young guy—maybe twenty—and I remember thinking that he was the palest person I had ever met. There must have been a long period when he was in prison that he had no access to sunlight.

KW: Did you carry CPD materials in your suitcases?

JL: Generally no. I once went to participate in a demonstration in Poland that called for the release of prisoners who were in jail under martial law. I wore a t-shirt that carried a political message—I think I still have the t-shirt—but I had taken a white t-shirt and a magic marker with me, and wrote down the message the night before. I did once bring some materials sent by the London-based Czech human rights activist Jan Kavan to dissidents in Czechoslovakia. I definitely breathed a sigh of relief once I was out of the airport carrying the books he'd asked me to bring. On one of my early trips to Poland I'd received a request from women there for books about feminism, and I brought as many as I could manage.

I didn't bring lists of names and phone numbers with me on these visits, of course. I'd usually have the phone number of a key contact person memorized, or partially written out in two or three different places, and it was usually someone whom the authorities were already very familiar with. They were public dissidents, and presumably known for meeting with people from outside the country. That person would then make the necessary introductions.

KW: Would you have gone to the U.S. embassy if you'd been arrested in a country like Poland or Czechoslovakia?

JL: Maybe.

TH: When I met with the Trust Group people in Moscow there was an unmarked KGB truck outside the building with listening devices. You could see a couple of tall poles poking out of the truck.

JL: I remember when I met with the activist Petr Uhl at his home in Prague. He told me to take a look out the window at the traffic light on the street corner. There was a camera placed on top of the traffic light that was pointed right at his apartment.

TH: The repression in the Soviet Union was a lot fiercer than it was in these other countries. Dissidents were still being shipped off to mental hospitals in the 1980s in the Soviet Union, for example.

KW: The 1991 Yale conference on "Post-Communist Futures" was held in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union and Soviet-style regimes across Central and Eastern Europe. Did the Campaign have a clear sense of what was happening, or did you think to yourselves, "Man, we are really paddling in the dark here."

TH: Something in-between. We knew that there were certain demands that we needed to raise—for example, we were strongly opposed to the policy of shock therapy.

Liberal Interventionism

JL: But we were also experiencing some arguments within the Campaign before the start of the Gulf War in 1991. Some members of the Campaign's Board of Directors were in favor of sending hundreds of thousands of U.S. troops into the region—not necessarily to start a war, but to send the Iraq government a message. That was Noam Chomsky's position, for example. Tom and I were unconvinced, shall we say, and we wrote an article opposing the impending war that appeared in *The Progressive*. On the other hand, everyone on the Board was against the war once it started, which enabled us to move on. But for a while things were a little tense.

During the Cold War these kinds of disagreements didn't surface, since everyone broadly agreed that they were opposed to both Washington and Moscow. But as the Cold War ended, these differences emerged. Some were willing to back some forms of U.S. military intervention—not uncritically, and not consistently, but on occasion.

TH: An early glimmer of this kind of liberal interventionism surfaced around the issue of Bosnia in 1992-1994. The Campaign took a position in favor of lifting the arms embargo so that the Bosnians could defend themselves against Serbian aggression. But we also argued against any form of U.S. military intervention in Bosnia, whether through bombing campaigns or troops on the ground or whatever.

KW: Tom, you wrote extensively on foreign policy questions in the 1980s and 1990s, but you were also writing about party politics. Did you feel torn between writing about domestic and international issues?

TH: Both were interesting to me, and they were interconnected politically.

JL: You're not going to get a better foreign policy without a powerful movement independent of the Democratic Party.

TH: Yes. Part of what I tried to argue in my pieces on the Democrats was the importance of formulating a new, democratic foreign policy through independent politics, by creating a new party of the left. We obviously need to open up the question of military spending and it's not possible to do that within the current two-party system.

JL: Some of the people who have supported the Campaign over the years are also inclined to vote for Democrats. We did not make the question of the Democratic Party a make-or-break issue for our supporters. But at the same time, Tom and I never downplayed or disguised our fundamental critique of the Democrats and our support for independent political action.

TH: You know who was a big influence on me? Sheldon Wolin (1922-2015), along with his magazine *Democracy* (1980-1983). It was in large measure because of Wolin that I became inspired to write about American politics. He had a very sophisticated, radical point of view that was opposed to the two-party system and the status quo. If you look at my articles for *New Politics* on U.S. politics you'll see that the tone was definitely inspired by Wolin's essays and books. Very sarcastic, and a little bitter.

KW: Did you take any classes with Wolin when you were at Berkeley?

TH: No, much to my regret. I don't know why I didn't. Wolin had a lot to say about Reagan's triumph in 1980, not only about the Republicans but also about the complicitous, enabling role of the Democrats and the political system as a whole. That had a big effect on my thinking. Most people don't remember now how thoroughly traditional labor-liberalism collapsed at the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s. With Reagan's election I thought that we had reached the bottom of the barrel.

KW: Back to the Campaign: presumably your work attracted some fierce criticism from folks who were favorably disposed toward the Soviet Union. Were you bothered by some of the negativity?

JL: We were most definitely disliked by pro-Soviet types, including people around the U.S. Peace Council. Mainly what we encountered was the secondary effect, however. We had to deal with activists in the peace movement who were influenced by or at least talking to pro-Soviet types. The occupational hazard of the peace movement during the Cold War was the reluctance to criticize the "other side" so as, the thinking went, not to give support to "your side." They were not hardline CPers but many people did believe that in order to justify lower military spending you had to argue that the Soviet Union was basically a benign actor in international affairs. Luckily there were always some people who supported us and who recognized the importance of reaching out to genuine peace activists in the Soviet bloc—and in fact the numbers of such people increased over the years of our

work.

These questions are relevant to this today. Most people in the peace movement are not pro-Assad, for example, but they are reluctant to criticize the Syrian government on the grounds that if you attack Assad you must favor U.S. military intervention. There are some people in the peace movement, for example, who call for organizing delegations to visit the Russian Embassy in Washington, D.C. to thank them for agreeing to a ceasefire, rather than challenging their intervention in the first place.

KW: Jesus, that's idiotic.

JL: That's what was so useful about E.P. Thompson's role in the 1980s in the peace movement. He very skillfully articulated a perspective of *détente* from below.

TH: After the fall of Soviet Communism in the early 1990s things became a little more difficult. Many human rights and peace activists developed serious illusions about U.S. imperialism. That was a battle that had to be fought over and over again.

JL: There were a number of people—not in the Campaign, but in the larger peace movement—who argued, with the fall of USSR, that NATO had a valuable role to play in Europe and elsewhere. For some people the idea of being opposed to U.S. military intervention on principle was a difficult pill to swallow. I remember just after Bill Clinton was elected in 1992, meeting with someone who had been a Campaign supporter in the past . CPD co-director Jennifer Scarlott[24] and I met with him to ask for further support, and he began the conversation by asking eagerly, "Does either of you have the ear of the Clinton administration?" as if that were the key question. I doubt that he would have asked about our influence with an American president during the Cold War.

KW: Did it become harder and harder to raise money after the fall of the Soviet Union? Was this one of the reasons why the Campaign was put on hold in the mid-to-late 1990s?

TH: That was the big reason. The Clinton years were the years of the locust so far as the Campaign was concerned. It was very hard to do anything. None of our funders were interested in the issue of Bosnia, for example. Many people felt that Serbian aggression against Bosnia had to do with age-old incorrigible ethnic hatreds, and that all sides were somehow equally aggressive and bloodthirsty. Then they looked to the Clinton administration and the UN to figure things out. They weren't interested in an independent approach to defending Bosnia's sovereignty and the lives of ordinary Bosnians.

Near and Middle East

KW: What led you to revive the Campaign in the early twenty-first century? Was it the build-up to the Iraq war?

JL: That was definitely part of it. In 2002 we drafted a statement that made the case for opposing both Saddam Hussein and U.S. military intervention. The statement first appeared in the *Nation*, and then in the *New York Times* and elsewhere.

KW: It's striking how a third camp approach can be applied to both Eastern Europe in the 1980s and the Middle East in the early 21st century.

JL: More recently we were inspired by the Arab Spring in 2011, but the problem is that pretty much everywhere—not just Syria—serious repression has been directed toward pro-democratic forces in the region. I reluctantly accept what Gilbert Achcar has argued, that the Arab Spring was the start

of what is going to a long process, and that we can't expect sustained immediate victories. But at the moment the situation is grim—there's not only repression directed by state military forces, but also the rise of jihadists of different varieties. As a result, pro-democratic forces face at least two enemies, if not more.

It's also worth noting that it was much easier for people like us to meet activists in Eastern Europe and even the Soviet Union than it is in places like Iraq and Syria. The way we sorted out who was who in Eastern Europe was by going there and meeting with people. I wouldn't feel safe visiting Iran, for example, even though at the moment there isn't the kind of overt military conflict that's going on in Libya or Syria.

KW: Are you beginning to get a sense of who's who in the Syrian opposition?

TH: It's murky—we don't know much about the groups. Unlike a lot of people, we recognize that there is a civil society in Syria that is very much alive in many parts of the country. That's a hopeful sign, but I'm not optimistic about how things will play out in the coming months and years. The better groups are getting decimated, or have made their peace with the jihadists.

KW: Are you surprised at the scale of quasi-Stalinist support for Bashar al-Assad and the Russians within many sections of the American left?

TH: I'm not sure if Stalinism is the best label for this. Certainly there's a fear of radical Islam that pushes some people in the direction of strongmen like Assad—that you need a strong leader to keep the forces of Islamic extremism from gaining power.

JL: I also think that it reflects U.S. leftists' terrible sense of weakness—they don't feel as if they can influence events, so they look to someone like Assad who can stand up against the Americans and the jihadists.

TH: The collapse of the Arab Spring has paved the way for a profound sense of pessimism. So many people refuse to believe that there was anything good about the Syrian revolution. There's a lot of cynicism about this, and people just refuse to be convinced that there are masses of ordinary people on the ground in places like Syria who are neither pro-regime, nor pro-U.S., nor jihadist.

JL: From the outset there have been important voices on the left who have argued that Assad is an anti-imperialist leader who stands up against the United States and therefore deserves our support. And their attitude toward Syrian opponents of Assad is that these people are objectively helping U.S. imperialism. Beneath that is a larger sense of cynicism and pessimism that is very pervasive on the U.S. left.

TH: Even before the Arab Spring there were people on the left who refused to believe that there could be authentically indigenous movements from below in the Middle East. Quite a few people, for example, argued that the Green Movement in Iran was something that the State Department had somehow organized, and this was a couple of years before the Arab Spring. The same arguments that people made against the reform movement in Iran are now being used to prop up Assad's regime in Syria.

JL: It was easier to make the argument, however, that the Green Movement was a mass, democratic movement—the evidence in terms of photographs of hundreds of thousands of people marching in Tehran and so forth was very difficult to overlook. The initial movement in Syria was so quickly repressed that it's easier for these people to deny that it ever took place. The situation became militarized very quickly, which placed democratic activists in an almost impossible position. The pro-Assad forces are receiving an enormous amount of support from the Russians, whose leaders are

keen to restore Russia's status as a world power.

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[3] Key sources on the history of the Shachtmanite current include Peter Drucker, *Max Shachtman and His Left: A Socialist’s Odyssey Through the “American Century”* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1994); Irving Howe, *A Margin of Hope: An Intellectual Autobiography* (New York: Harvest, 1984); and Maurice Isserman, *If I Had a Hammer: The Death of the Old Left and the Birth of the New Left* (New York: Basic Books, 1987).

[4] On the Berkeley Free Speech Movement, see Robert Cohen and Reginald E. Zelnick, eds., *The Free Speech Movement: Reflections on Berkeley in the 1960s* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), and Hal Draper, ed., *Berkeley: The Student Revolt* (New York: Grove Press, 1965).

[5] Kent Worcester, “Third Camp Politics: An Interview with Phyllis and Julius Jacobson,” *Left History* 18, no. 1 (2014): 39–60.

[6] Seymour Landy (1931–2007) was a Marxist writer and activist. He was a member of the Independent Socialist Clubs (ISC) and the International Socialists (IS) in the 1960s and early 1970s, before breaking with the IS in 1973. He subsequently cofounded the League for the Revolutionary Party in 1976.

[7] Max Shachtman (1904–1972) was a leading Trotskyist before he split with the movement in 1939–1940. He cofounded the Workers Party (1940–1947) and its successor organization, the Independent Socialist League (1947–1958). His books include *Behind the Moscow Trial* (1936) and *The Bureaucratic Revolution: The Rise of the Stalinist State* (1962).

[8] Deborah Meier is a longtime educator and a leading advocate for the small schools movement. Her books include *In Schools We Trust* (2002) and *Many Children Left Behind* (2004).

[9] George Rawick (1929–1990) was a historian whose works include *From Sundown to Sunup* (1971) and *Listening to Revolt: The Selected Writings of George Rawick* (2010). He edited the 41-volume set of oral histories of former slaves, *The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography* (1971–1979).

[10] Mike Parker is a veteran labor activist. His books include *Inside the Circle: A Union Guide to QWL* (1986) and *Choosing Sides: Unions and the Team Concept* (1988, with Jane Slaughter). He is currently active with the Richmond Progressive Alliance in California.

[11] Joel Geier is an associate editor of the *International Socialist Review* (ISR). His coauthored response to Martin Smith's "Talkin' 'bout a Working-Class Revolution" appeared in *Left History* in 2013. See Candace Cohn et al., "Response to Martin Smith's 'Talkin' about a Working-Class Revolution': Not the IS, Not in Our Name," *Left History* 17, no. 2 (2013): 137–156.

[12] Sam Farber is a Cuban-born socialist. His books include *Revolution and Reaction in Cuba, 1933-1960* (1976), *Before Stalinism: The Rise and Fall of Soviet Democracy* (1990), and *The Origins of the Cuban Revolution Reconsidered* (2007).

[13] Mike Shute's essay "For an Independent Campaign against Brown and Reagan, and the Building of a New Party" was circulated by the ISC in 1966.

[14] Lisa Lyons is a longtime socialist-feminist cartoonist. She creates cover art and interior illustrations for the semiannual journal *New Politics*.

[15] Hal Draper (1914–1990) was a writer and socialist activist. His essay "The Two Souls of Socialism" (1966) is a classic of socialist thought. His books include *Berkeley: The New Student Revolt* (1965), *Karl Marx's Theory of Revolution*, Vols. 1–5 (1977–1990), and *War and Revolution: Lenin and the Myth of Revolutionary Defeatism* (1996).

[16] Ernest E. Haberkern is a member of the Board of Directors of the Center for Socialist History and the coeditor, with Arthur Lipow, of *Neither Capitalism nor Socialism: Theories of Bureaucratic Collectivism* (1996).

[17] Jack Weinberg is a longtime labor and environmental activist. He was held in a police car for 32 hours for sitting at a Congress of Racial Equality table and not showing a student ID. Three thousand people surrounded the police car, and the FSM was launched.

[18] Phyllis Jacobson (1922–2010) and Julius Jacobson (1922–2003) co-founded *New Politics* in 1961 and served as co-editors until 2002. Their co-edited book *Socialist Perspectives* was published in 1983. Julius Jacobson also edited *The Negro and the American Labor Movement* (1968), and *Soviet Communism and the Socialist Vision* (1972).

[19] Robert Avakian is a former Free Speech Movement activist and Chairman of the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP).

[20] Nelson Lichtenstein is a professor of history at the University of California at Santa Barbara and director of the Center for the Study of Work, Labor and Democracy. His books include *Walter Reuther: The Most Dangerous Man in America* (1997), *State of the Union* (2002), and *The Retail Revolution: How Wal-Mart Created a Brave New World of Business* (2009).

[21] Lois Weiner is a professor of education at New Jersey City University and a member of the *New Politics* editorial board. Her books include *Urban Teaching: The Essentials* (2006) and *The Future of Our Schools* (2012).

[22] ANSWER ("Act Now to Stop War and End Racism") is a U.S.-based coalition that was founded by members and supporters of the Workers World Party shortly after 9/11. The group maintains a self-consciously "anti-imperialist" stance and continues to organize rallies and demonstrations against different aspects of U.S. and Israeli foreign policy. Both the Workers World Party and ANSWER are loath to criticize authoritarian regimes that are in conflict with the United States and its allies. See Answer Coalition; and David Corn, "Behind the Placards," *LA Weekly*, October 30, 2002, both accessed on January 9, 2018.

[23] Arthur Lipow's (1935–2016) books include *Authoritarian Socialism in America: Edward Bellamy and the Nationalist Movement* (1982) and *Political Parties and Democracy: Explorations in History and Theory* (1996).

[24] Jennifer Scarlott was a co-director of the Campaign for Peace and Democracy, as well as an editor and contributor to CPD's *Peace and Democracy News*, from 1990 to 1998. She currently serves as Coordinator of two grassroots organizations in the Bronx—Bronx Climate Justice North and North Bronx Racial Justice.