May 2, 1994

Dear Friends,

Most of you around the country think of the A.J. Muste Memorial Institute as a source of funding for nonviolent social change and a resource for literature on peace and social justice. You may have also noticed that our address, 339 Lafayette Street, pops up a lot in reference to Movement activity. That's because part of our mission is owning and operating the building here, known colloquially as the "Peace Pentagon." We maintain two floors of office spaces which are rented out to social change groups at below-market, subsidized rates. What makes this possible, without eating up your contributions, is that the ground floor is occupied by commercial storefronts paying market rates. The economy being what it is these days (and the fact that our neighborhood is not a "classy" area), the building operates at a break-even level most of the time.

Many of the groups in the building could not maintain the offices necessary for their work or would use up a much greater amount of their precious cash to do so if it was not for the space we can provide. In an area where there's fewer affordable rentals all the time, we're happy we can provide this important resource. It's too bad that our building is so small; we've had, on the average, a three year waiting list of groups wanting to move in.

In this issue of Muste Notes, we're happy to present a short report on all the activities emanating from 339. It's pretty impressive for a small corner in the world of social change. This, along with our grants and publications, is what your support continues to make possible. Thanks again.

Sincerely in peace,

Murray Rosenblith

Murray Rosenblith,
Executive Director

MUSTE NOTES

News from the A.J. Muste Memorial Institute

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 3 SPRING 1994

ACTIVITY ON LAFAYETTE STREET

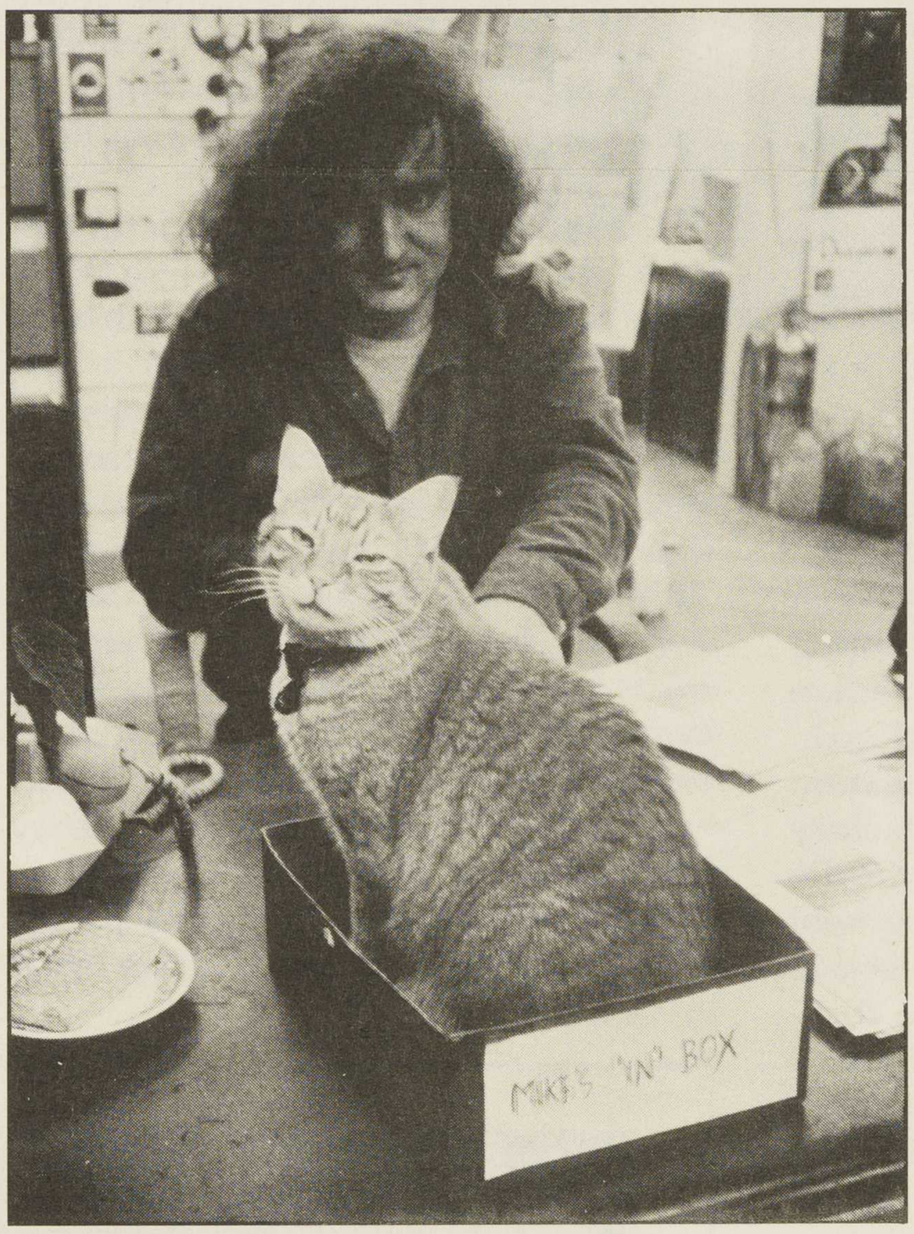

PHOTO BY DAVID MCREYNOLDS

A.J., the building cat, "sits in" on Mike Levinson's desk in the War Resisters League office.

Things are bustling here at the "Peace Pentagon," 339 Lafayette Street. Our mascot, A.J. the cat, is as plump and affectionate as ever, and very healthy. He sheds a lot, though, now that Spring is here.

A really good sign of Spring is the new bicycle lane painted onto Lafayette Street, helping to make riding in NYC a little bit safer for all cyclists, especially those of us who cycle to work here at 339.

War Resisters League is going through some staff changes and a restructuring process to ensure a productive future. Ralph DiGia, Karl Bissinger (now a volunteer) and David McReynolds are still around. So are the ever-present and irreplaceable volunteers: Liz Aberman, Mike Levinson and Jim Moss, as well as some enthusiastic young interns from the alternative City-as-School program. The WRL Long-Range Strategic Planning Committee is accepting resumes for several staff positions. If you're interested, send a letter of intent, resume, etc. to WRL, LRSP Committee. Don't forget to send for WRL's new lit list—and they still have some of this year's cookbook peace calendars left, at a big discount.

Libertarian Book Club is sponsoring anarchist forums on such topics as the politics of the revolt in Chiapas, Mexico, and the life of anarchist and labor organizer Rose Pesotta. They have rented out part of their office space to another resident group, Amanaka'a Amazon Network.

The NY Metro office of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) is gearing up for the Women Fighting Poverty Conference on May 21 at the New School for Social Research. WILPF initiated the conference, bringing together 24 citywide organizations to address the effects of poverty on women. They are also working toward the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Bejing, China, in 1995. WILPF still shares part of their office with Deep Dish TV, who last year moved their main office upstairs to the old Catholic Peace Fellowship space on the third floor. (Catholic Peace Fellowship shut down their office, but still receives mail here.)

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