How Can Women Help Prevent Another War?

(To All Women Readers of The Progressive Farmer:)

DR. POE

Of all the utterances in our literature and history there is hardly any sentence more heart-rending than the cry of David over his war-slain son—"O my son Absalom! my son Absolom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

In this article I had first intended simply to appeal to Southern women to help save their sons, husbands, and brothers from such deaths by war. But present-day warfare does not at all stop with wounding or killing young men in battle. Women, children, and infants may be alike destroyed without number if we let World War III occur. And there is serious danger that we may have such a war unless women and men of all countries — and especially America — go all-out to prevent it.

Today there are again just two great powers, Russia and America, that face each other with the threat that some incident or accident may set off a world reaction. Such a situation would have been bad enough and sad enough 50 years ago, but now it is infinitely worse. Modern science has given warring nations weapons more ghastly and hellish than were dreamed of in any nightmares of our fathers and grandfathers. No longer does war mean that a relatively small proportion of the human race will face another small proportion on some distant battlefield. With the coming of hydrogen bombs and nuclear weapons, death by war menaces every doorstep. Every man, woman, and child lives in peril. Is it not now agreed that the I.C.B.M. (intercontinental ballistic missile) can soon be delivered by Russia to any point in the United States and by the United States to any point in Russia? Also, do not scientists and statesmen agree that the human race might be destroyed by such missiles? The "New York Times" uses words well considered and well authenticated when it refers to "man's new ability to destroy himself and all life on this planet" . . . while the new novel, "On the Beach," pictures the possible results in horrible detail.

What can you do? I mention first what you women can and should do as voters because the ballot can be made your greatest weapon for world peace. You women need to vote not merely in primaries and national elections to elect peace-loving Presidents, Senators, and Congressmen, but you should be 10 times more active in studying conditions that promote war and policies to prevent it. Has it not become your solemn duty to find out how each Congressman and Senator stands on matters that threaten peace, and what he proposes to do about them? Maybe we should not spend any less effort or money to prepare for war. **But certainly we need to spend 10 times as much effort and money to prevent war from occuring.**

Our supreme aim should be to support the UN now and work for genuine worldwide disarmament with adequate inspection to insure its being carried out through the United Nations. So long as nations are armed to the teeth with present-day trigger-quick weapons, there is danger that some international accident or some advocate of "shoot first" might start a conflict that would become worldwide.

Every woman reader should also realize how influential she can be by writing letters to our Representatives and Senators in Congress and to leaders in your political party. Farm letters do get attention. As President Barrett of the National Farmers Union used to say: "When a Congressman gets a letter some week from a farmer or farm woman on some subject, he acknowledges it politely and probably does nothing. When he gets two such letters, he becomes interested. When he gets three or more, he gets excited and decides he had better do something about it." Such is the power you can exert by letters written by you and your friends. But you should not stop here.

Above everything else, I believe we must strengthen and revitalize the religion we profess in Christian America. We are not Christian if we merely think and plan to prevent others from killing us. We must be equally anxious not to kill other people. We must convince the nations of Asia and Africa and even Russia itself that we have at heart the Christian doctrine of **love**—love in the sense of wishing to help all mankind and especially the poor, the ignorant, the sick, and the underprivileged peoples in all effective ways.

We must find out more about movements and conditions in other lands. And partly to help you do this I present information I accumulated when I served on the International Development Advisory Board. These statistics show the contrast between economic, educational, and health conditions 1) in the so-called Developed Regions of the world (such as Europe and America), and 2) the Underdeveloped Areas in which countless millions in Asia, Africa, and South America now live in rebellious discontent:

	Developed Areas	Under-developed Areas
Illiteracy, per cent	5	79
Per-capita income per year	$461	$41
Doctors, per 100,000 people	106	17
Persons in each 100 living till 15	92	54
Persons in each 100 living till 60	70	15
Life expectancy, years	63	30

At this point, I recall a good friend who had been stationed in China who asked a Chinese friend why he had joined the Communist group. Answered the Chinaman, "I am getting old, yet never have I known my family to have shoes in winter or to go to bed at night without being hungry. Then Chiang Kai-shek promised help, but did not make good. Maybe the Communist won't, but we can, at least be no worse off." Such was his argument.

It is such wretched poverty as indicated in the above table that explains why so many countries in Asia and Africa may be won by Russia and lost to America's side. Russia and America are in a contest to win the friendship of these handicapped people. Yet if they can be made to believe our only interest is to win their friendship **for our own security,** we will certainly fail. Adlai Stevenson presented an ideal that

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men and women in all parties should approve when he said, "It is my hope and dream for America that it may be **not merely feared but loved.**" That should indeed be our aim.

Every minister and every local church should have constant prayers and programs to help save humanity from the scourge of war and bring us a new era of peace for all nations. But we cannot have such peace without an active helpfulness in helping the underprivileged nations to acquire equality of opportunity with other nations. Such help for the underprivileged must be regarded not as "foreign aid" or even as "mutual security" alone, but also as an expression of the Christian doctrine of love for all mankind—including even our enemies. We should express our friendship for the people of Russia, India, and China however much we may dislike their governments.

The new discoveries of science give us the opportunity to abolish poverty and to have a world vastly more free from ignorance and disease than anything men have dreamed of in the past. But the only way is through the master word of Christ as it must become of the Christian churches—love. And to win recognition for this fact our women must act both individually and through their organizations, churches, and voting privileges.

Sincerely your friend,
Senior Editor and Board Chairman.

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Don't Miss The Chartered Bus Trip To New York City And Washington, D. C. April 15-18, 1958

ITINERARY

Tuesday—April 15

9:00 A.M. **Busses leave Greensboro, N. C.** Carolina Trailways Bus Station for New York City
1:30 P.M. Lunch — Richmond, Virginia, Carolina Trailways Bus Station
6:00 P.M. Supper en route
11:00 P.M. **Arrive New York City**—Hotel Picadilly, 227 West 45th Street

Wednesday—April 16

7:30 A.M. **Breakfast — Hotel Piccadilly Circus Lounge,** "Broadway's favorite rendezvous"
9:00 A.M. **Tour of New York City**—Boat Ride and visit to the Statue of Liberty . . . Tour of Chinatown and the Bowery . . . Times Square, Theatre District, Herald Square, Saks, Gimbel's, Macy's, Little Church Around the Corner, Greenwich Village, Wall Street, Fulton Street Fish Market, and many other points of interest.
1:15 P.M. **Lunch at the Automat**
2:30 P.M. **Visit United Nations Headquarters**
3:00 P.M. Film, "Introduction to the United Nations": Hour-long programme which includes an explanation of the work and organization of the United Nations and a showing of selected films on the United Nations.
4:00 P.M. **Guided Tour of United Nations**—General Assembly, Conference and Secretariat Buildings.
6:00 P.M. Supper
8:40 P.M. **Broadway Theatre Production, "My Fair Lady"** — Mark Hellinger Theatre, 51st Street West of Broadway
Walking Tour of Times Square at night following Theatre production.

Thursday—April 17

7:30 A.M. **Breakfast—Hotel Piccadilly**
8:40 A.M. Load busses with baggage and **leave for United Nations Building**
9:00 A.M. **Group Photograph** at the United Nations
9:30 A.M. **Briefing with Dr. Frank Graham,** U.N. Chief Mediator
10:30 A.M. **Visit U.N. Bookstore and Gift Shop**
11:30 A.M. **Lunch in the U.N. Delegates Dining Room**
1:00 P.M. **Briefing by representatives of a U.N. Specialized Agency**
2:00 P.M. **Attend U.N. Special Sessions**
3:45 P.M. Leave for Washington, D. C.
6:00 P.M. Supper en route
11:00 P.M. **Arrive Washington, D. C.**—Hotel Franklyn Park, 1332 I. Street, N.W.

Friday—April 18

7:00 A.M. **Breakfast at Shell's Cafeteria** (Load busses with baggage)
8:00 A.M. **Visit Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument**
9:00 A.M. **Briefing with Senators Scott and Ervin**
10:00 A.M. **Tour of the Capitol,** and visit to the Congressional sessions
12:00 P.M. Lunch
12:45 P.M. Leave Washington for Greensboro
6:45 P.M. **Arrive Greensboro, N. C.**

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