

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WOMEN FOR PEACE RALLY

**Pacifica Radio Archives: “Protests, Rallies,
Demonstrations”**

(Funded by The Ford Foundation)

Transcript of Women For Peace Rally. Documentary from actuality, which examines such topics as the news industry’s monopoly on information, the hazards of nuclear testing, the dangers of technological innovation, violence in our society, the tragedy of arming the Third World, fear of going against popular opinion, and the plight of women. Recorded in Berkeley, California on November 1, 1961.

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We appreciate your comments, additions and corrections. Please address them to: Brian DeShazor, Director, Pacifica Radio Archives, 3729 Cahuenga Blvd., West, North Hollywood, CA 91604. Phone: (800) 735-0230, e-mail: pacarchive@aol.com. Also contact Pacifica Radio Archives for information regarding audio CDs.

Transcript

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PACIFICA ANNOUNCER MIKE FRANCISCO: Pacifica Radio presents Women for Peace, a documentary program produced by Elsa Knight Thompson and Mike Tigar.

FRANCES HERRING [Founder, Women for Peace]: Friends of Peace in the East Bay area, we are convened tonight as part of a spontaneous expression of women across this country who are appalled at the mad race toward mass murder and suicide. No organization, no sponsorship, no treasury is behind us. It is simply that something like forty towns and cities across the country responded to a letter sent out by eight Washington, D.C. housewives, suggesting that November 1st be a day on which women

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everywhere designed some effective way of developing public support for President Kennedy's disarmament proposal. The President's actions, since his speech to the U.N. on disarmament on September the 25th, undoubtedly reflect, I think, the pressures he is under. He has told his close associates that he cannot continue to lead in the direction of disarmament if he does not get assurance of some follow-up. We women are determined to build such a strong peace pressure in this country, that we can stop the warmongers from being the deciding factor in our national policy. (APPLAUSE)

FRANCES HERRING: General and complete disarmament, in timed stages, under U.N. supervision, planned to give *no* military advantage to any nation, and building as you go along, the peace agencies to enforce it, is the *only* hope left now from deliver – for deliverance from this impending nuclear death. (APPLAUSE)

MIKE TIGAR: So opened the November 1st Rally of Women for Peace in Berkeley, California. The eight women in Washington, D.C., appalled, so they wrote, at their own audacity, "for we are just ordinary people," had set into motion thousands of women all over the United States, who, forming themselves into ad hoc groups, had spent all day calling on their elected representatives to urge them to stand up for peace. Frances Herring, whose voice you heard a few moments ago, chaired the meeting and called on one of the women, Sandra [Lapelle ?], to report on the day's work.

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SANDRA [LAPELLE ?] (SL): Before I begin, I want to say that I understand very, very well Congressman Cohelan's [Jeffrey Cohelan, 1914-1999, U.S. Congressman from California, 1959-1971] exclamation of "E-gads!" when forty or so-odd of us descended upon his office uh, [BABY CRYING IN BACKGROUND] when provisions had been made for six or seven, and this is exactly the way I feel, because last night, oh, about a dozen women asked me if I would make this presentation and I said, "Yes," never expecting a turnout like this.

SL: Uh, let me explain very briefly, for those of you who were not present at City Hall this morning, exactly what the plan of action was, and then I will report on the events of the day. This morning at ten o'clock, women from all over the East Bay, Berkeley especially, uh, in our area, assembled at City Hall, gathered in front of placards which stated the names, addresses, and times of appointments for the various city, state, and national officials that we were to visit. The women signed up and met at these various places at the specified times and, *en mass*, we entered the offices for these appointments, one, uh, spokesman for each group.

SL: We had a three-fold plan in mind. One was to introduce ourselves, state our mission; two, present the gentleman with an envelope addressed to the Spokesman, so that, were he to comply with our wishes, he would send us a carbon copy of a letter that he was to write to President Kennedy and Dean Rusk, uh, and Adlai Stevenson, if he so

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desired, to attest to the fact of our being there; and, three, was to give him a list of our own names and addresses on the back of an excerpt from President Kennedy's speech before the United Nations, with his plan for disarmament. The reports from these meetings have been coming in all day. They're still a bit discombobulated, but they are very encouraging, for the most part, and, in one or two cases, rather humorous. Uh, what I would do – like to do now – is just list the names, in brief... [FADES UNDER NARRATOR]

MIKE TIGAR: Sandra Lapelle [?] went on to report, in some detail, on a number of visits to the officials, and then the audience, which packed the auditorium of a local school, listened to a number of speakers drawn from many parts of the community. The speakers discussed and related various aspects of the fight for peace. On this program, we can bring you only the highlights from these talks. The first speaker was Elsa Knight Thompson, Public Affairs Director of KPFA, who began by pointing out that she did not represent the station; that she spoke as a *woman*.

ELSA KNIGHT THOMPSON (EKT): - and not only as a woman, but as a woman who has worked for twenty-one years in the field of communication, of public information, and worked with the complete conviction that it is the most important single factor in making a democracy tenable. I do not believe that democracy is *possible* without it, and without it in adequate quantities. Uh, Thomas Jefferson said, uh, "If a nation expects to

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be ignorant and free, it expects what never has been and never will be.” And it is my conviction that we are ignorant and that we are rapidly ceasing to be free.

EKT: Uh, in a book recently published by A.J. Liebling [1904-1963, American journalist], who has written so charmingly in The New Yorker for many years, called The Press [New York: Pantheon, 2964]. He gives some very interesting figures. Out of one thousand four hundred and sixty-one cities in the United States that have a daily press, all but sixty-one of them are one-ownership towns. In other words, only *one* ownership, a monopoly, controls the news that the people in that city shall have. The press has become a big business and the news you are given is more or less like the free lunch that used to go along with the beer, only the news goes along with the advertising. There are only twenty-five newspapers in the United States that have any foreign correspondents of their own. Another about a hundred papers get some of their services, like The New York Times' foreign coverage service. But it leaves about seventeen hundred dailies in the United States that are dependent completely on your news wire services and your news wire services are inadequately staffed. Even if you have to set up groups among yourselves to read documents, to, uh, get the texts of public statements and so on some way, find out a way so that by omission and commission, you can't be left in ignorance.

EKT: I also would like to mention the fact that finding out is not *all* the answer. I, uh, remember when I was about twelve, and something, uh, catastrophic and bitter had

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happened to me, which I cannot now recall, and my mother found me crying in my bedroom and wanted to know what was the matter and I said, "I'm tired of finding out things I don't want to know." (LAUGHTER) Uh, and among people who have *not* informed themselves about the world that we live in right now, if they begin to, they're going to find out a lot of things that they don't want to know, and a lot of things that are going to *break* all the images, all the almost sub-conscious assumptions that we have made about ourselves as a people. If you are going to be afraid of anything which is *critical* of your own people, of your own government – Now, I know this is a highly select audience, but nevertheless, there are assumptions that many people continue to make. There *are* things that really shock us when we find out that they have been done in our name. And I think it's going to take quite a lot of courage if women are going to come into the situation, uh, not just under the blanket of some little, tight group, but really a cross-country thing like this, that they don't get frightened out, not only by the truths that they will find, if they look for them, but by the things that will be said about them. By the contempt that is still held by many people for *women*, uh, trying to mess around in these things. By the fact that the words, 'Left' and, uh, other words of like nature, can be used, uh, for and about anything that suits the purposes of these people. I believe women *do* bring something to the situation, which *could* be useful. It's one of my theories (and the men can laugh), that women are closer to reality.

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EKT: Perhaps it's an almost *biological* thing, that we're closer to the earth, closer to the practical things. I *think* that one of the most terrifying things that I know is that women's suffrage has altered nothing whatsoever at all. The voting patterns have not been changed by the fact that women vote. In a way, it's a disgrace, with the number of things that need to be done in our world. That the arrival of women, as full-fledged citizens, has really made no difference. And yet, it *could* make a difference. I *abominate* feminism, and this dividing business, but I think there is a difference in what women might contribute. Uh, I think also that, if you want *courageous men*, and most of the things are still done by the men, then you have to have courage yourself. You have to be willing that your husband shall lose his job, or that your son shall be a conscientious objector, or whatever else it is that's necessary. But I think the *first* step is the kind of things you're doing now, as long as it isn't just a gesture. That you carry it on. That you *do* learn to be informed. That you're willing to accept the facts that you may find. And that you're *willing to ignore* your critics and act. Thank you very much. (APPLAUSE)

MIKE TIGAR : Dr. Christian Bay, an Assistant Professor at the University of California, and Research Associate at the Center for the Study of Human Problems at Stanford [University], and author of The Structure of Freedom, [New York: Atheneum, 1965] was the next speaker. He analyzed the present political situation and the possibilities for political actions. One of his points was...

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CHRISTIAN BAY (CB): The Soviet resumption of testing, no what the reason or motives may have been, strikes me as the most reckless, irresponsible, and *stupid* act of which any great power has been guilty during the last five years. It is a reckless – (APPLAUSE) It is a reckless and irresponsible policy, for it dooms sizeable numbers who are now living, and our, as yet, unborn human beings, to leukemia, bone cancer, physical deformities and so on. It is also a stupid policy, for evidently it reduces or postpones considerably the prospect for a lasting reduction of world tension and disarmament, and these are objectives, I think, that are more eagerly sought by the Soviet, than by the Western leaders, though I might be wrong in this. But *why* did the Russians do it? For many people, including many who write or speak in the mass media, and manage to be respectable without being responsible, the answer is all very simple. They did it because they are Communists, and consequently, immoral, reckless people. Vilifications on that level explain nothing, but contribute to the hatred and fears which become manifested in reckless, international behavior. At such a hair-triggered point as this, Dr. Lewis Mumford [1895-1990, American historian of technology and science, philosopher and critic] said, in a recent address on the Berkeley campus, the persistent public baiting and taunting of the Russian government and the Com – of the Communist system by our leaders, only betrays their incapacity to come to grips with reality – the reality of Soviet Russia's existence, the reality of the world's need for their willing consent and cooperation in the enterprise of insuring mankind's survival and continued development. Not only right-wingers in this country habitually apply *only* the worst

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possible interpretation to every Soviet policy and only the *best* possible interpretation to every American foreign policy. In fact, nearly every newspaper with a large circulation tends to do just that, and the result is a widespread self-righteousness that makes many people incapable of understanding the views of, say, neutral leaders, or even the points of view in responsible British newspapers. I do not mean that we should refrain from expressing our indignation against the Soviet leaders at a time like this, when they arrogantly go about polluting mankind's atmosphere, but we should also seek to understand why they are doing this, and if we prefer peace to a phony self-righteousness, we should also ask ourselves if some of our side's international policies, too, might be reckless and irresponsible and needlessly contribute to Soviet's irresponsibility.

MIKE TIGAR: And, in closing, Dr. Bay quoted the British playwright, J.B. Priestley [1894-1984, English author, playwright, essayist, social commentator], twice.

CB: If you don't mind, I will quote that again. "You may believe," says Mr. Priestley, "as I do, that if the citizens of great powers are more sharply, less like sheep, then States would soon be less like wolves. If we object strongly and persistently enough to belligerent policies, to civil defense mobilization, and to reckless brinkmanship, then I think we may still be able to bestow on our children the priceless gift of a right to live and to build families of their own in peace and freedom. From their point of view, is

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there any doubt that they'd rather have part of the world Red, than all of it dead? Now keep up the good work. (APPLAUSE)

MIKE TIGAR: The next speaker, Dr. Leona Beard [Sp?], is a physician whose special field is the problem of growth and development. She has written a book on the subject and was a consultant at the last White House Conference on Youth. Dr. Beard [?] drew a parallel between the healthy development of the child into adulthood and our own ambivalence in facing world problems with the necessary maturity.

DR. LEONA BEARD [?] (BD): I think, that as physically mature citizens in the modern world, we are playing two roles at once. We are, nominally, adults in the world into which we were born, but we are also adolescents, still groping painfully into the world in which we will all live, or all die. As adults of the familiar world, we are frightened. We hold back. We must, we say, "You must stay in your own home, your own social group, your own loyalties, even your own bomb-shelter, but, as youth in the real world of today - and I mean, us - *youth*, no matter if we're over fifty or not - we're already part of the whole community of mankind. We can have breakfast in Berkeley, drive to the San Francisco International Airport and fly to Tokyo in time for breakfast - and I don't remember now whether it's tomorrow or yesterday - but we wouldn't arrive for sukiyaki and saki if there were not an international going society cooperating on many levels, and we wouldn't start on this journey if we didn't already have confidence in this

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cooperation. Our *youth* is already a part of One World. The fact is, we belong to world – One World and, in a way, we do know it. We know it because we know we can blow it up, in two atomic blasts and aggression and its answer. The fact is, also, that in the U.N., we have created the machinery which can make the one world work, but, like many adults, we are ready to give lip service to the new status, but we are really afraid to let our children, or ourselves, go. We say, “Hang your clothes on the hickory limb, but don’t go near the water.” This kind of, of rhetoric won’t do. We *can’t serve* the peacemaking machinery of the world, the *fact* of its inter-relatedness with *rhetoric*, while we serve the war machine with all we have. We have to let ourselves grow up to our own maturity, which we can only reach as members of the community of mankind as a whole.

(APPLAUSE)

MIKE TIGAR: Michael Tigar described the three attitudes toward peace, which he believes to be current on the campus of the University of California.

MICHAEL TIGAR (MT): The first sort of student reaction that *I* encountered is an acceptance, uh, of the military policy of the United States. The attitude that elected Mr. Eisenhower in 1952, where “Well, he’s a military man, he really *does* know best.” This attitude, I submit, is rather unrealistic. We know the recommendations of our military men: MacArthur [General Douglas MacArthur, 1880-1964] in Korea, with regard to the bombing of China; Radford [Admiral Arthur William Radford, 1896-1973, U.S. Navy]

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on Formosa, with regard to the bombing of China. Uh, Radford at Dien Bien Phu with the regarding – regarding the use of atomic weapons in succor of the French during the Indochinese revolution; the recommendation of some of our military leaders that we send troops into South Viet Nam. The coup d’etat administered by our CIA to the Laotian government in December of 1916. Many students accept these. Uh, I answer to them, when I meet them, that the military doesn’t have the answer to our present problem, and I offer them the words of Huertsen [?]: “They couldn’t be the doctors. They are the disease.” (APPLAUSE)

MT: The second reply is one that occurs not only on campuses in America, but has also taken the fancies of a number of young men in France, as well. And this is a kind of symbolic resignation from the human race, a kind of belief that one can detach one’s self from one’s society and thus find a kind of intellectual purity above the, uh, the milieu, above the shouting crowd. This attitude, it seems to me, represents a good deal more than merely abdication, because it happens to be impossible to achieve this kind of independence from the world. We live, you know, under a tyranny, and the bomb is only one aspect of that tyranny. It’s already stripped us of a number of our civil liberties. Another aspect of that tyranny has resulted in the mediocrity of our mass culture. Uh, it’s impossible to *escape* from this tyranny in our own society. One’s only alternative, therefore, is the third. It’s the thing that I think has brought you here tonight. It’s a thing that brings student groups together, as the students were brought together on the steps of

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Sproul Hall [Administration Building, University of California, Berkeley] yesterday and today. It is the *belief* in action. The *belief* that, by recognition of the problem, by speaking *out* about the problem, by informing one's fellows about the problem and one's government about one's *feelings* on the problem, that it's possible for *people*, acting in concert, to change the course of history. In some – and I think this is something that's being grasped by an increasing number of students, and certainly by an increasing number of the people in communities all over the world (APPLAUSE) – and I wish you'd been at the news desk yesterday and today – to see the stacks and stacks of material on protests that are taking place, just like this one in cities all over the world. Today, today the words of Brecht [Bertold Brecht, 1898-1956, German playwright and poet] acquire a new significance: “All of us, or none.” (APPLAUSE)

MIKE TIGAR: Allen Temko [1924-2006, Pulitzer Prize-winning architectural critic and writer, based in San Francisco], introduced as a critic of the environment, writer, West Coast editor of The Architectural Forum, and lecturer at the University of California, felt that the sickness of society is general, and not confined to our relations with other governments. It is world wide and has affected our architecture, as well as our politics. Mr. Temko made it clear that he does not condemn industrial society, as such.

ALLEN TEMKO (AK): And I should like to make clear that I believe that industrial technology is, potentially, the most precious of man's inventions, but because of the

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misuse of technology, our machines, properly used, could transform this world into an Eden. Every educated person knows this and even illiterate people, in an age of rising expectations, sense the potential beauty and majesty of a truly civilized industrial society. But we have no politics to equal our technology, much less our science, and therefore, not only Russian, American, British, and French nuclear bombs have poisoned the environment, but the exploitation of the natural environment itself, for supposedly peaceful and useful purposes has, itself, become a poisonous process, appalling to behold, almost impossible to believe, of wherever the modern revolution has really taken hold. Los Angeles, for example, is a bomb. (APPLAUSE) A bomb exploding malevolently over hundreds of square miles of Southern California. “The most maleficent of, uh, criminals, Bernard Shaw said, “would not rebuild London in its present image.” One wonders what criminality is responsible for a city such as Los Angeles. (LAUGHTER), Which is not even a city, but a senseless conglomeration of people in buildings, automobiles and other machines, sprawling along the coast from Ventura to San Diego, like one gigantic T.V. commercial. (APPLAUSE AND LAUGHTER) Another malignant megalopolis has spread from Boston through New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, down to Norfolk, Virginia, along the East Coast of the United States. Another cancerous super-city festers over a two hundred mile strip, along one of the finest lakes in the world - from Gary, Indiana, through rank Chicago, to ugly Milwaukee. But this is worldwide. In other countries, conditions are as *bad*, fundamentally, but they are occasionally mitigated by the beauty of venerable centers of

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civilization, the cores of London, Paris, and Rome, and of Leningrad, I suppose Moscow, too, and Peking [Beijing], one of the great cities of the world. But somehow, absence of control at the core, a failure, as some writers have said, of *nerve*, has resulted in killing devastation. I'm drawing your attention to cities, largely because they are my own main field of interest, but I believe comparable social diseases can be diagnosed in virtually every realm of human activity. It's all one thing now. And, like cancer, malignancy in social, uh, organizations, may be arrested by surgery. But we have no basic cure for the illness itself. That cure can only be political. Smog, the city, ugliness, brutality in a brutal building, as well as military brutality, is a *political* problem, but because the problems we face are unprecedented, in all of these affairs, they can be solved only by unprecedented political means. We need a *new* politics, and possibly the brave and innocent spontaneity of the women who have demonstrated today on behalf of peace, is one of the first steps toward such a new politics. (APPLAUSE)

AT: The new politics must be kind, and generous to a degree mankind has not yet had the common sense to contemplate. (APPLAUSE) It must be motivated not only by a respect for people, as individuals, a respect I see almost nowhere among the governments of the major powers, but also by *love*. The modern world, at its best, supposedly so rational in its pursuit of the earthly paradise, has nevertheless been afraid of love, as it has been afraid of philosophical mystery, and afraid of politics. In the end, this means that it has been afraid of *man*, and man ends by being afraid of his machines. There's still time,

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but the hour is late, and now, regarding a world which, at any moment, may be irretrievably mutilated, if not entirely destroyed, I am reminded of painful words written by W.H. Auden [1907-1929 English and American poet], during the Spanish Civil War, when the world was soon to be plunged into ruin and slaughter. “The stars are dead,” said the poet. “The animals will not look. We are left alone with our day and the time is short and history, to the defeated, may say, ‘Alas,’ but cannot help or pardon.” Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

MIKE TIGAR: The next speaker, Decca Treuhaft [Jessica Mitford, 1917-1996. English and American author and activist. Married to Bob Treuhaft], author of Daughters and Rebels, the story of her family--the Mitfords, took a startling approach to the bomb problem.

JESSICA MITFORD [JM]: Most of us are engaged in something or other, which we don't want to be stopped in, all of a sudden. There, there's the students, who are studying for their degrees and businessmen about to close a deal, that sort of thing. All the research on the verge of a new discovery. It's depressing to think of, uh, being cut off. (LAUGHTER) I'm starting, at this point, because I have a rather particular reason for deploring the drift toward atomic war. Er, my husband and I are writing a book at the moment. Now - (APPLAUSE AND LAUGHTER) Well, uh, I mean, many of *you* are probably writing books, too, but uh, many of your books may not confront the same

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problem that our book will, as you will see when I explain it. Because, uh, because of the subject matter of our book, um, thermonuclear warfare would almost certainly have a *very* disastrous effect upon the sales. See, the thing is, we're writing a book about the *funeral* industry in the United States. (LAUGHTER) Uh, please no laughter. I mean, it's very serious, now. We, um, it's about the reasons for the high cost of dying and what one can do to combat it. You know, that sort of thing. We had thought of one possible title: The American Way of Death [New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963], which we thought was, uh, - it was sort of catchy and, uh, and, you know, we thought, appropriate, you know, subject matter. Now, we've done a great deal of research on the subject. We subscribed to Mortuary Management, which is a trade magazine. You know, it tells you the various types of casket you can order. Some of them have, uh, foam rubber mattresses. Others have, uh, - There, there's this one with a reclining posture. (LAUGHTER) No kidding. You know, our publisher is quite excited about it. And furthermore, just today, before coming to the meeting, we got a special delivery letter from England, saying a publisher from England is also interested in the book. Now, this made us think that we should, you know, *broaden* the scope a *bit* and possibly change the title. You know, we were thinking of "Funerals in a Free World", you know. (LAUGHTER AND APPLAUSE) We, we thought that that might require a, an explanatory sub-title, "Behind the Formaldehyde Curtain", you know. That sort of - Anyway, uh, as you've probably guessed by now, the book is basically one of these *reform* books, you know, dealing with the - I mean, the purpose, uh, is to expose the

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showy and elaborate funerals that people have disliked over the years, you know, and that has been forced upon the public. We, uh, are *against*, in general, the fancy funeral establishments, with the elaborate “slumber rooms” and the lovely “memory picture,” uh, you know, created by the embalmer, uh, and so forth. This kind of thing, we’re opposed to, you know. Uh, we – It’s really supposed to be a pretty serious study of the thing and, uh, we were going to *advocate* the sort of reform that the Bay Area Funeral Society Advocates. In other words, uh, simplicity, and a quick cremation. That was the idea!

JM: It’s sort of going to be a *crusading* book, you see, advocating these things. Now, it’s beginning to look as though the very *basic* reform that we do advocate, the quick cremation, you see. And, uh, you know, and no fuss, no muss, uh, (CLEARS THROAT) (LAUGHTER) uh, and hardly any expense, you know. Uh, uh, all of this, I mean, it may be carried out on a very *widespread* scale before our book is, uh, even published and then, as I say, I don’t think the publishers can look well upon it (LAUGHTER) , uh, because you know, not only will it, will the cremation be as reasonable a cost, but it will be downright *free*, you know, for all comers and, uh, I think this sort of thing will have a terrible effect upon the sales of our book. I’m very serious about this.

JM: Actually, I’m also suddenly beginning to think – it’s not quite in my nature, generally, to think this way, but I’m becoming very *conservative* about this whole concept of funeral reform, you know. Uh, this – in the last few days, I’ve been thinking

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this over rather carefully – I think we may need to *readjust* our attitude and be a bit more cautious and conservative, you know. Because this, as in *all* human endeavors, there should be moderation. As far as this speedy cremation, and, uh, simple disposal of the remains is concerned, I think we should sort of revise our thinking to say, “Go slow. Don’t try to do it all in one day.” (LAUGHTER AND APPLAUSE)

MIKE TIGAR: Erna Harris has been concerned with peace education for children. She’s also a member of the National Executive of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom [WILPF], which was founded by Jane Adams in 1915. Erna Harris asked what we owe our children.

ERNA HARRIS (EH): What do we owe them? Well, in my view, we owe them many, many things, but I’d like to speak of three. First, the means of living. Second, assurance to them of their place among the people whom they consider their own, their little circles. And, thirdly, we owe it to them to signify to them the peculiar character of the human animal. Some animals, in cold weather, for instance, just grow thicker fur, more feathers. When the climate or the environment is a problem to the human animal, he or she makes a tool – a wrench, a pair of pliers, a bulldozer, a computer, and those tools *change* us in the *same* ways that the changes in other animals (which they just *grow*, they don’t make) change them. And so we need to *heed* the fact that the things which we make, for constructive living or for destructive living, *change* us, and they change the children who

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look to us. *You* know about the problems in schools, with the Civil Defense drills. You know about the mass media, and the cute little kiddies “news programs,” with their subtle terror, with their hatred. Does it occur to any us, I wonder, to *monitor* those programs and let our feelings about them be known? Do we keep in *mind*, for instance, the power of a good example? Not only to our children, but to our *neighbors*, to the people in the same PTA group, etc.? To our officials, perhaps even more?

EH: Do we realize the problem of climate and atmosphere for children? There has been a cartoon around, which I thought was a good joke until today at lunch when, across from me, there were two women sitting talking about the children of the neighbors. And one of them said, “Did you hear Jimmy talking yesterday?” The other one didn’t, hadn’t, and she said, “Well, he and his friend were down there, and his friend said to Jimmy, ‘What do you want to be when you grow up?’ And Jimmy said, ‘Well, if I’m still here, I’d like to be a doctor.’ And his friend, whom this woman later described as about ten, said, ‘Oh, you’ll be busy. All those people with two heads.’” These things *live* in the hearts of our children. These are the things we’re working to eliminate.

EH: And concluding, I would like to call your attention to what I think is *one* slight difference, perhaps, between men and women. For instance, the preoccupation of *men* with *concepts*, and their debate about them, and their willingness to *die* for them. It seems to me, that *women* need to turn themselves firmly towards something that is

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naturally a part of, of a development out of their social function. Since they seem to realize, perhaps, more than men, that it is in *living* that concepts are defined, and, if concepts are worthy dying for, they're even *more* worth the *living* which is required to define them in our lives. (APPLAUSE) Let us give this to our children.

MIKE TIGAR: Olive Mayer is a mechanical engineer, President of the Science Education Products Design Company. She began by describing her reaction to the women's activities of that day.

OLIVE MAYER (OM): Today, about fifteen women in San Mateo County visited our county officials. Some of them said they would write letters, as we requested. Some of them said they would not. But, I want to mention their overall, uh, attitude. It seemed that *all* of them felt that they were *part* of an organization and that this – they had real loyalties to this organization and to their community, and we were asking them to speak out, really, as individuals. We were asking, we were *reminding* them of something, of some ideals that they had stood for, that they *did* stand for, asking them to remember these ideals and to be people, and to stand apart for something that was good. To stand for *life*. And, uh, the value of our trips, I think, was talking to these people just as human beings and calling into question, all of the Cold War orientation of their work.

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OM: Uh, they were, some of them were just a little uncomfortable to be confronted in this way, and I realized that most men are very protective, and most men are concerned to protect their community, and to protect their wives and families. This seems to be the basic instinct in the male. And now we've come to the time when we *cannot* be protected. They cannot protect us. There is no protection. And therefore, we women must stand up and say what needs to be said. We do not *care* to be protected with weapons which will destroy other women and children and families like ourselves in other parts of the world. (APPLAUSE)

OM: We are concerned about our children. In our days, we want them to practice the piano. We want to make sure they do their homework. We keep their clothes clean and feed them. This is a very simple thing to say, but I think it needs to be said, and when they grow up, we don't want their bones crushed and their blood scattered across the world. Uh, when we look at the work that many of our people are engaged in today, one third of the people in California work in war industries. We ask what meaning is there, really, in these people's lives? Can they go to work each day with joy? And our husbands, who must spend their lives building things which are useless, their energies, their time, and work to what end? For what purpose? Can we really believe in the things that we are working for? And, of course, all around us, faced with brutality and destruction, we must answer that *much* of our time and our effort and our lives are really futility. We want some *beauty*. Uh, we want some joy. We want a future with real

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meaning for our children. We must *stand*, therefore, at this time, for *life* as against death. This is the fundamental stand that we must make as human beings and as *women*.

MIKE TIGAR: Mrs. Mayer went on to describe one of the great issues of today, the living conditions in the under-developed countries, and contrasted the eighty billion dollars spent by the five major powers on armaments, with the billion and a quarter spent on technical assistance. “What sort of a world could we build,” she asked, “if the figures were reversed?” In closing, she said –

OM: “The Cold War not only takes the meaning out of our lives, and therefore deprives us of joy, but it also, uh, is resulting in the complete deterioration of our democracy and the destruction of all of the *real* principles of America, which we hold dear. So, I’m going to conclude by saying that it’s up to us women, the creators of life, to stand up now and say that we want a *new* kind of protection – disarmament – because this is the only protection that really protects. (APPLAUSE)

MIKE TIGAR: The next speaker, Wallace McDonald, who was introduced simply as a citizen of El Cerrito.

WALLACE McDONALD (WD): A little over a month ago, I wrote a letter to any and all people who would be interested in what I had to say. The gist of this letter was that

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we should try to do something to stop the drive toward war. That it would be evil not to try to do something and that we should start a revolution designed to be *for* human beings everywhere. I wrote this letter out of a profound feeling that we, in our everyday life, constantly betray our American tradition and ourselves by *not* speaking out honestly about our lives and the world crisis, by *not* expressing ourselves personally, by not reflecting in our daily lives what we really feel. We don't express ourselves honestly because of fear. Fear that we'll be labeled a Communist. Fear that we'll antagonize our boss. Fear that we will sully our reputation. Fear that we'll betray our ignorance. And fear, the greatest fear of all, that we'll make a fool of ourselves. I think it is time that we spoke up in spite of our fears. The response to this letter was very hopeful and very helpful. One gentleman told me he was inspired to go out to Livermore with some friends and protest the bomb shelter program up there. I called two meetings with some of the people who had responded positively and, out of these meetings and discussions, a number of projects and ideas were generated. Some people started, "Dear Mr. President" coffee-klatches, the plan of which is to get together a small number of friends and neighbors. Each person writes the President about disarmament or whatever he is concerned about. These letters are then used as a basis for discussion. Some individuals set up a table and typewriter on Shattuck [Shattuck Avenue in Downtown Berkeley] and asked people if they would care to write a letter to the President supporting his disarmament proposals. If the people felt so inclined, they could then dictate a letter on-the-spot. Some people have gotten together to work out a Hiroshima Peace Exhibit and,

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in this connection, are trying to get a movie on Hiroshima. Some individuals have been writing pamphlets. Other ideas have been offered. Uh, other ideas that have been offered have had to do with starting neighborhood discussion groups. Teenage rallies for peace, radio programs, advertisements in the paper for the purpose of soliciting ideas for pushing the Peace Offensive.

WM: In thinking over what has been happening, the main idea that I have gotten is the idea that people everywhere should start expressing themselves honestly, personally, humanly; that the basis of this whole drive toward war is the loss of one's sense of being a human being in a community of other human beings. We have not just an opportunity (mimeographing machines are plentiful), but we have a responsibility and a duty to express ourselves and let others know how we feel. (APPLAUSE)

MIKE TIGAR: Hana Pitkin, Instructor in Government at San Francisco State [HP later became a Professor of Political Science, University of California, Berkeley], compared the Soviet and United States' disarmament plans.

HANA PITKIN (HP): As of the Summit, uh, the negotiations were still primarily focused on a Nuclear Test Ban and the primary difficulty that was existing there was that the United States, uh, maintained that we shouldn't *ban* anything that we couldn't police the ban on and, since there is a lot of question about whether one can detect small-size,

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underground tests, uh, the United States didn't want to include these in a Test Ban, whereas the Soviet position was that a Nuclear Test Ban ought to include *all* tests, even underground tests, even those, ostensibly, for peaceful purposes. Uh, another point which was debated at this time, was the problem of inspections, of course, as I'm sure you know. Uh, the position, *really* of both sides, the whole negotiations, were focused on *how many* inspections, uh, ought to be permitted, it having been more or less agreed (although the Soviet Union, primarily, uh, took the position that only a limited number ought to be allowed in each country during each year, something like that.) And, of course, there was disagreement on the composition of whatever international body would supervise these inspections, the Soviet Union maintaining that this should be, uh, according to the formula that we're now so familiar with, as a troika-division: a representative of the Soviet Union and its allies, a representative of the United States and its allies, and a supposed 'neutral.' Uh, then, in June, there began, uh, as the Peace talks, as the, uh, Nuclear Test Ban talks in Geneva bogged down increasingly, there came the first suggestion from the Soviet Union that Nuclear Test Ban negotiations should be combined with disarmament negotiations, which has since, of course, uh, become strongly the Soviet position and, apparently, been accepted by the United States – witness President Kennedy's proposal.

HP: Uh, at that time, in the summer, of course, the United States' position was still that, uh, a Test Ban should come first, and really quite separately sort of as a, uh, sign of

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goodwill and as a first step. Uh, if you ask yourself, *why* the idea of combining a Test Ban and disarmament negotiations was introduced, uh, by the Soviet Union, I have no inside information on this, but it seems to me quite clear, on the face of it, just from the newspaper accounts, that there is *one thing* which, uh, predominantly has guided Soviet policy, really, oh, since the middle of the forties with regard to, uh, disarmament, uh, and international police force and so forth, and that is concern, uh, about *espionage* against Soviet forces, concerned that such a system not be turned into, uh, a system of espionage. Whether justified or not is not the question at the moment. Uh, so the Soviet Union has said *repeatedly*, and again as late as late last month, that it's perfectly willing to have at once effective control over disarmament. What it does not want is control over armaments. And, specifically last month, it spelled this out in some greater detail, by saying that the Soviet proposal was to have very *rapid* disarmament, that is, within four or five years, to have complete and general disarmament. And, clearly the point here is that, if you have an inspection system, and achieve the disarmament very quickly, you come as close as you can to the ideal situation, which would be simply to do away with all armaments at one blow and then inspect to see that nobody creates any new ones, which cannot involve any espionage, any spying on what armaments the nations still have. But if it's a system of stages, you face a problem in this respect.

HP: Now, finally, uh, what the Soviet Union, uh, said in September, just before the President spoke, *was* that it was – this, again, was not a new statement at the time, but

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had been made before, that the Soviet Union was willing, *unconditionally*, to accept *any* Western proposals for control measures, *if* the West accepted the Soviet disarmament proposal, that is, this fairly rapid disarmament proposal, and they added that they were willing to negotiate on this time limit. They did not insist on four to five years, although they said they thought it was a *realistic* time limit. They were ready to consider other proposals, but that, in any case, a time limit should be quite definite and should be short. Now, at this point, uh, President Kennedy then spoke to United Nations and presented a plan, which you've probably read about, at least summarized in your newspapers. In the Introductory section of the plan that was submitted, uh, the signatory nations, if they sign, are *urged* to act as rapidly as possible, and to continue their discussions without interruption. Nevertheless, the plan still consists, as I imagine you know, of three stages. Uh, this is not *new*. The Soviet and American disarmament negotiations have been based on three-stage plans for some *years* now. Uh, in the first stage, an international disarmament organization is supposed to be set up, *and* a United Nations police force is supposed to be set-up. Uh, this, as you know, was provided for in the United Nations Charter actually, when it was founded, but has never been activated. Uh, at the same time, within the International Disarmament Organization, there are supposed to be Commissions for various purposes. For instance, a Commission on Nuclear Weapons, uh, to discuss what is feasible in the way of doing away with *them*; a Commission on Radiological, Chemical, and Biological Warfare, to discuss what's feasible, uh, to deal with those weapons. At the same time, still in this first step of the plan, the nations are

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supposed to re-affirm their adherence to the principles of the U.N. Charter, uh, their commitment to refrain from the threat or use of *force* in their dealings with other nations. As far as the actual disarmament goes, the armed forces of both the United States and the Soviet Union are supposed to be reduced to 2.1 million men apiece, at this stage, and those of other nations to lesser proportional amounts to be agreed on. Uh, armaments are supposed to be reduced to agreed on amounts. Uh, armaments production is supposed to be limited. Uh, weapons delivery systems that can carry nuclear warheads, missiles, in other words and so forth, uh, are supposed to be reduced and their production curtailed, all of this by equitable and balanced steps, the idea being, again, uh, to strive for fairness.

HP: At this point, however, in the first stage of the plan, uh, there is not yet a reduction of nuclear weapons. What you do have in the nuclear field proposed is, first of all, a Test Ban, uh, to include all nations; secondly, a commitment by those nations that have nuclear weapons, *not* to give them to any other nations, not to give nuclear secrets or information to any nations that don't yet have them; and, thirdly, an end to the production of fissionable materials for the purpose of making more nuclear weapons, and to use the transfer of any fissionable materials that have been produced to peaceful uses. But, at this stage, the nations still keep their nuclear stockpiles. Uh, finally, they undertake a commitment, in this first stage, to notify the International Organization if they're going to launch any missiles or anything like that, if they're going to engage in any major military maneuvers. Uh, there's a good deal of concern expressed in the proposed resolution

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about the possibility of *accidental war*, and a commission is supposed to set up within this body to study, particularly, the problem of avoiding accidental war.

HP: Uh, in the second stage, then, things are supposed to proceed further. There's supposed to be action on the recommendation of the Commission that's been studying doing away with nuclear weapons. There's supposed to be action on the recommendation of the Commission that's been studying chemical, radiological, and biological warfare weapons. Uh, there's further reduction of armaments and men under arms. There is further enlarging of the International Organization and of the United Nations Police Force.

HP: And, finally, this is supposed to culminate in Stage Three, in which all of the nations in the world have been reduced to armaments sufficient to police their own internal affairs, uh, and to supply the United Nations Police Force, and conditions should be such that the United Nations Police Force is stronger than the armed forces, the police forces remaining with any of the nations. The Soviet reaction to this was expressed two days after this was submitted, uh, by Mr. Gromyko [Andreyevich Gromyko, 1909-1989, USSR Foreign Minister, 1957-1985; Soviet President, 1985-1988] at the United Nations. Uh, many of the proposals met with his approval and acceptance. Many, of course, have been negotiated before, uh, between the two nations. The two major points of difficulty were just the ones that you would expect from what I was saying about the Soviet position

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before this. That is, first, the American plan still proposes inspection at each of the three stages, and proposes negotiating the details of each stage as the previous one is completed. So, from the Soviet point-of-view, this still leaves a situation where each nation *has* armaments, and the international group is inspecting to see how many they have left, that they don't increase what they have left, while they're destroying what they're supposed to be destroying, and so forth. The American plan proposed that all of the signatory nations, uh, select a small number to form this Control Commission. Specifically, that all of the major powers should each have a permanent representative on the Control Commission, and then there should be some seats for lesser powers, to be rotated among them, essentially the same way the Security Council in the United Nations is composed. Uh, this, the Soviets said, was not acceptable, and they continued to propose a troika, tri-partite division of seats on the Control, uh, Council.

HP: Well, in sum, then, uh, we have two proposals. We have, really, a whole series of proposals going back a considerable distance, put forth by the United States and by the Soviet Union; their texts, by now, really very similar. If you do something like count the number of sentences on which there is disagreement, they are a very small proportion of the whole. Still, uh, I wouldn't want to close by saying, by way of warning, that this may not be the right way to *assess* the distance between the two countries, as far as, uh, commitment and willingness to negotiate goes. It seems to me quite clear that, if the two governments are *willing* to reach such an agreement, it can be done without any

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difficulty, uh, even if there are a *large* number of sentences to be ironed out. And, conversely, if either or both of the two governments, are *not* truly interested in reaching such an agreement, it doesn't help if the differences are only a single sentence. What the two governments want to do, uh, certainly in the case of ours – I think, in the case of both governments – depends a good deal on the people. (APPLAUSE)

MIKE TIGAR: Women for Peace, still acting within a loose, unstructured, unfinanced framework provided by eager volunteers. As this program is produced, a petition campaign is underway. Hundreds of women are collecting signatures on petitions addressed to President Kennedy and Premier Khrushchev. The petition reads, “In our names, and in the names of our children, we appeal to you. We appeal for peace, for the immediate start of talks on disarmament. We appeal to you to take a long, bold step toward general and complete disarmament before the year dies. We want to greet the New Year with horizons free of the arms race and of the threat of war. We plead for peace.”

MIKE FRANCISCO: You have heard “Women for Peace,” a program produced in the Berkeley studios of KPFA for Pacifica Foundation. The program was produced by Elsa Knight Thompson, Public Affairs Director of KPFA, and Mike Tigar. Remote recordings were by Beatrice Koch. The narrator was Mike Tigar and this is Mike Francisco.

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End of Transcript of Women for Peace Rally

NOTES:

1. U.S. President John F. Kennedy, Address Before the General Assembly of the United Nations, New York City, September 25, 1961,
Transcript, audio and visual available at www.jfklibrary.org

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