

Thomas Merton and the PAX Peace Prize

By John P. Collins

In his definitive biography of Thomas Merton, Michael Mott writes that the year “1963 . . . brought [Merton] recognition and awards. Such awards had to be accepted by others on his behalf.” Victor Hammer accepted an honorary Doctor of Letters degree for Merton from the University of Kentucky, and Dan Walsh “read the paper Merton had prepared when the Merton Collection at Bellarmine College Library was officially opened on November 10.” Mott mentions another award from the same year, the PAX Peace Prize, and quotes briefly from Merton’s acceptance speech, but provides little further information.¹ The details relating to this early recognition of Merton’s leadership on the issue of peace have not previously been investigated in depth, and have not always been clearly understood because the name “PAX” was used by different groups with which Merton was in contact.² A closer look at the circumstances of the award reveals that Merton’s words and work for peace were appreciated not only in the religious community but in the worlds of academe and politics.

The first PAX Peace Prize was presented to Thomas Merton *in absentia* on the evening of October 20, 1963 by Harvard University history professor H. Stuart Hughes, who had founded the organization awarding the prize a year earlier.³ Like Thomas Merton, Hughes was a passionate defender of peace who abhorred war as a way of solving international disputes and believed that one had the obligation to “withdraw from the national consensus” for war, a step that “entails a painful psychological rupture with the greater part of one’s friends and associates.”⁴ H. Stuart Hughes (1916-1999) was a member of a very prominent family; his grandfather, Charles Evans Hughes, was the 1916 nominee of the Republican Party for President, and later Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court. His father, Charles Evans Hughes, Jr., was an accomplished lawyer who was appointed Solicitor General by President Herbert Hoover. Stuart Hughes lived his early life in the suburban community of Riverdale, NY and later attended Deerfield Academy and Amherst College, where he was a *summa cum laude* graduate.⁵ Frequent travel to Europe, and studies at universities in Heidelberg and Munich, whetted Hughes’ appetite for European intellectual history. After doctoral studies at Harvard, where he wrote a dissertation on “The Crises of the French Imperial Economy, 1810-1812,” Hughes began his teaching career at Brown University, but during his second semester, faced with the likelihood of being drafted at the outset of World War II, he joined the Rhode Island National Guard Field Artillery Unit. After several months as an enlisted man, Hughes was transferred to military intelligence, becoming a member of the newly formed Office of Strategic Services, when the army recognized his prowess as an historian conversant in French and German; he reached the rank of lieutenant colonel before being discharged in 1946. Hughes then served two years with the State Department as Chief of Research for Europe (1946-1948) before



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going to Harvard as an instructor. After a short period at Stanford University, he returned to Harvard as Gurney Professor of History and Political Science in 1969.⁶ Both he and his second wife, Judith, were appointed professors at the University of California, San Diego in 1975, where he taught until his retirement in 1986. Hughes was the recipient of numerous academic awards, including an Award for Scholarly Distinction from the American Historical Association in 1997, which recognized his preeminence in the field of history and “a strong claim to be one of the finest intellectual historians of Europe of his generation.” Other awards “included a Guggenheim Fellowship, two decorations from the Italian government, membership in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a visiting membership at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton University, a fellowship at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University, and foreign membership in the Academia Nazionale dei Lincei and Istituto per la Storia del Risorgimento Italiano in Rome” (*Perspectives*). Hughes authored twelve books, including a trilogy depicting the European intellectual life of the late nineteenth and twentieth century: *Consciousness and Society* (1958), *The Obstructed Path* (1968), and *The Sea Change* (1975). Titles of other books include *Contemporary Europe: A History* (1961), *Prisoners of Hope* (1983), and several collections of essays in book form, including *An Approach to Peace* (1962). His final book was his autobiography, *Gentleman Rebel* (1990).⁷

Hughes was a political activist while at Harvard and in his autobiography he devotes a chapter to his 1962 campaign for the United States Senate, when he ran as an independent candidate against Democrat Edward M. Kennedy and Republican George Cabot Lodge. Hughes articulated a “triad of peace, racial equality, and social justice” as his platform focal point (Hughes 253), which was consistent with his statements at the end of his career when he reviewed the four “public or semipublic stands” he had taken: “anti-Cold War, anti-nuclear, anti-Vietnam, pro-women” (Hughes 315). The strong feelings held by Hughes about the possibility of nuclear war are reflected in his statement about the “official” campaign platform not precisely expressing his view on disarmament: “People had only to read my recently published *An Approach to Peace* to see that I was actually closer to unilateral disarmament in nuclear policy” (Hughes 254). Hughes collected 149,000 signatures, double the number required to be placed on the ballot as an independent candidate. However, during the latter days of the campaign, Hughes took a bold stand against President Kennedy’s Cuban missile decision of October 1962. Hughes states:

If I did not answer the president at this point, I would not be true to what I set out to do in this campaign. . . . I did not say that the president was entirely wrong. I said rather that he acted overhastily in imposing the blockade, that he had bypassed the United Nations, that he had unnecessarily stirred up an atmosphere of national emergency. . . . In brief, I maintained that the installation of Soviet missiles in Cuba, although it altered the military balance somewhat, did not change it nearly so decisively as the official American spokesman claimed. One of my main points all along had been that there was no such thing as a balance, that the nuclear situation was inherently unstable and hence intolerably dangerous. It was up to my country, I argued, to take the initiative in substituting international action for power plays (such as the one the Soviet Union had just pulled off in Cuba) by rival military blocs (Hughes 256).

Hughes readily admitted that his stance on the Cuban missile crises was “heretical” and that it scared off many of his supporters. In his memoirs, he concedes that President Kennedy was probably right in “the short run.” Hughes acknowledges that his position on the Cuban missile crisis probably cut his

vote in the election by one-half. He was able to garner only 50,000 votes, 2% of the total vote, far short of the 149,000 signatures he received to get on the ballot (Hughes 256-57). However, in his memoirs Hughes is very positive about his campaign; he felt that in being a candidate, one puts oneself “on the line,” moving outside the comfortable niche of a college professor who may speak or write about an important issue. “We were trying to impress on the minds of our fellow citizens that for a minority of people in one key state of the union the issue of human survival was worth an extraordinary commitment of time and energy. And that I think we accomplished” (Hughes 260).

Hughes evidently initiated contact with Thomas Merton sometime early in 1962, presumably in response to one of Merton’s published essays on peace. On May 8, 1962 Merton wrote to W. H. Ferry: “I got a letter from H. S. Hughes and sent him the *Cold War Letters*” (HGL 210-11). The first surviving letter in their correspondence is from Hughes to Merton in late November, 1962, evidently in response to a consolatory letter after his election defeat. He writes:

It was so good to hear from you again. Letters such as yours have completely lifted me out of my post-election blues. This also gives me an occasion to thank you for your contributions to the auction. This marked the high point of the campaign – before the Cuban blight descended on us. I was able to attend the latter part of the proceedings, and I can assure you that your contributions evoked particular interest and enthusiasm. I was delighted with the poem. You had earlier sent me the mimeographed book. Perhaps in the rush I forgot to thank you for it.⁸

The auction mentioned in the letter was a fund-raising event for the campaign, which Hughes describes in his memoir: “We held an art auction. Painters and musicians and writers responded with offerings, and the evening’s take was \$10,000 – although hundreds of potential buyers had to be turned away because the hall grew unbearably stuffy and the police invoked the fire laws” (Hughes 255). Merton had sent several items to this auction, accompanied by a letter addressed “To Artists and Writers for Hughes”:

In reply to your request I am sending three small things which may be of some use in an auction to raise funds. Two are corrected manuscripts of articles which have not been published in the U.S. One of these however has been printed in England and in Buenos Aires (in Spanish, in the magazine *Sur*). This is the article entitled “Letter to Pablo Antonio Cuadra.” A section of it appeared in a small magazine here, under another title. Both these articles may well be of interest to anyone who is concerned about peace, as they deal with this problem. Finally, just in order to be funny, I have sent a drawing, entitled “Action in Support of Friday.” I think the local expert would know better than I what may be the value of these things. I would be inclined to start somewhere around fifty cents each. But I guess that would not get much money for the campaign, would it? I wish I could be there.⁹

The election defeat did not halt Hughes’ political work on behalf of peace. Fresh off the campaign trail, Hughes and his loyal followers announced the continuation of the political organization that had sponsored his campaign, to be named the Massachusetts Political Action for Peace (PAX). The announcement of the new initiative was made in a document headed “Hughes for Senate Committee,” signed by Hughes and others, which stated:

A new political voice has arisen in Massachusetts: a non-partisan political organization has just been formed, the outgrowth of the 1962 Congressional campaigns of H. Stuart Hughes, William Hefner, and Elizabeth Boardman. The objectives of this organization will be to raise the issue of peace and disarmament to maximum visibility through politics; to prove that sentiment for peace is politically viable; and to develop and use political power, through the election of men and women to public office and through selective political activity in the interim period between election campaigns. . . . The name of the new organization shall be Massachusetts Political Action for Peace (PAX) The Hughes peace platform will serve as a common basis of agreement, subject to period [*sic*] revision. Domestic issues will be included insofar as they arise directly out of the same concerns for human life and personality underlying our activities on peace and disarmament. . . . In addition to running candidates for public office, PAX will undertake the following activities. . . . Maintain regular contact with peace researchers and supply information on peaceful alternatives to political incumbents and potential candidates; Act as a permanent Massachusetts lobby with the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency We will maintain regular contact with other peace organizations, such as Turn Toward Peace, SANE, and the Council to Abolish War, in order to complement our various activities and avoid duplication and effort.¹⁰

The document also mentions that several bills were submitted to the General Court of Massachusetts which included “a study commission to investigate the economic effects of disarmament on Massachusetts; a bill to create a radiation protection and study commission; and a petition to the U.S. Congress for a study of the economic implications of defense expenditures by U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency” (“Prospectus” 2). Mention of the organization SANE (Committee for Sane Nuclear Policy) is instructive in that Stuart Hughes was appointed co-chairman of this group in 1963, along with noted pediatrician Dr. Benjamin Spock; in 1967 Hughes became the sole chairman, serving in that capacity until 1970 (Hughes 250, 296).

One of the significant initiatives of Massachusetts Political Action for Peace in its first year was the decision to award a PAX Prize to a leading peace advocate. The recipient selected was Thomas Merton. Although no letter is extant from Hughes to Merton informing him of the award, a May 25, 1963 letter from Merton to Hughes responds to the honor and reflects on some of the difficulties in connection with receiving it:

I hope you have not come to regret having offered me a peace prize. When such things happen down here, the complications are interminable. There is still nothing too clear about what is to be done. But first of all I want to thank you, and I understand that I am allowed to accept it. That is already a big step forward. But there are more steps after that. I understand, or I hope, you have been told that I cannot come there personally. Hence I have to get someone to represent me. As I know practically no one in Boston, perhaps after all the best thing would be to ask someone like Allan Forbes, who contributed to my *Breakthrough* book if he would do me this favor. I will wait for an answer to [*sic*] you, and then write to him, hoping that he will not have left Boston. One thing I will want to know is the approximate date on which you have planned to make the award, so that I can tell him to be there then. But he probably knows more about it than I do myself. Anyway, I am very glad you have

thought it worth while to make this very kind gesture, especially since I am now reduced to a practical silence on the subject of nuclear war. The Pope has done a good job of saying what I wanted to say, and I had the spite to tell our Abbot General that it was a good thing the Pope did not have to get by the censors of our Order. I hope you have not been too inconvenienced by the indirect and confused way in which things of this type get handled down here. I am not too clear, myself, just what is coming off. But I will do my best to facilitate everything from here on.¹¹

The decision as to who would actually receive the award on Merton's behalf evidently remained nebulous for some time. Here Merton suggests the name of Allan Forbes, a Quaker and co-founder with physicist Leo Szilard of the Council for a Livable World, who had contributed an essay to the collection *Breakthrough to Peace* that Merton had put together with his publisher James Laughlin.¹² In an April 26, 1963 letter to Laughlin telling him of the award, Merton mentions Thomas McDonnell, a writer for the Boston Archdiocesan newspaper, *The Pilot*, and editor of *A Thomas Merton Reader*,¹³ as a possible stand-in:

By the way did you know that H. Stuart Hughes had awarded me a peace prize. Some New England Group, a medal or something. I am glad he thought of me, and am glad to accept it, except that I can't go. The editor of the reader, Tom McDonnell is in Boston and we are asking him to pick up the medal for me, otherwise I would have suggested you, and maybe he may not be able to. If not, would you be able to run up to Boston for a day? I don't know when. I would hate to bother you with this, though, as I know you are plenty busy. But you would be a logical choice, and it would be at Harvard and so on. Probably McDonnell will field it anyhow.¹⁴

In a subsequent letter to Laughlin, Forbes is again mentioned as picking up the award for Merton: "As to the peace medal, I am getting that by proxy (Allen [*sic*] Forbes) some time in August at a dinner somewhere. I wouldn't mind going to the dinner. I still don't know much about this either" (*SL* 228 [June 14, 1963]). In the event, though both Forbes and McDonnell attended the dinner at which the prize was awarded, held not in August but in October, neither accepted it on Merton's behalf.

The award also received attention in correspondence with other friends of Merton. In a letter to James Forest, Merton writes of the award in the context of his being silenced by his superiors on the issue of war and peace:

H. Stuart Hughes, up in Boston, has some organization that has awarded me a Peace Prize. Well, well. Me and Pope John. I am glad they thought of me, though, and appreciate it, though there is still not much I can do. But I think I told you I wrote to the Abbot General and said it was a good thing Pope John didn't have to get his encyclical through our censors: and could I now start up again? I will let you know what happens. The General is probably impregnable in his serene conviction that he really wants me to preserve the contemplative silence of our mystic order, and that is really his "only motive" (*HGL* 274 [April 26, 1963]).

In a series of letters between Merton and Robert Lax in October, 1963, the peace prize comes in for commentary. On October 5, Merton writes:

I send some manifestoes with the calligraphies because all I do and all I got is calligraphies and manifestoes, together with a peace prize which I won, but which

I view out of the corner of the eye from a distance and with studied indifference. A Monsignor in Boston is going to pick it up for me at the back door of the organization, while I sit here and write more manifestoes, mostly humble ones.¹⁵

Here for the first time the person who would actually pick up the prize for Merton, Msgr. George V. Casey, is identified, if somewhat vaguely. On October 17, Merton sends on to Lax a copy of the statement that would be read at the awards dinner, humorously distinguishing the Massachusetts PAX group from the poetry broadside of the same name that Lax published irregularly and to which Merton contributed:

One of the manifestoes is about my having received a medal. This is not a sly way of forcing you to grant me a medal with your Pax, because there is another Pax, yes, there is a Pax in every town these days. The one that gave me a medal is a Massachusetts Pax, and this Sunday the 20th they hang a medal around the neck of a Monsignor up there who will sing them a song as from me. See the paper for the song. Why they give me a Pax medal I don't know, maybe it is because I am the only person who has failed to start a war of some sort in the last month. So when I say Pax medal be calm, it is already the other Pax, and by the time you get this I will have the medal and my pride. Everybody else but me will be worn out from the banquet. (*WPSHV* 254).

Lax replied to Merton on the day of the awards dinner:

i am happy about the pax prize. i knew you never started any wars, (you were always saying you started the hitler war, but i knew no). did you start the Indonesia war? no, never. (i started the Indonesia war, but i would never do it again.) on the contrary, you are, if anything, *against* war. do the pax people realize that? i am not talking about that other pax, i am talking about the massachusetts pax. that other pax will give you a shiny, invisible prize: it is called the far-and-away-the best-contributor prize, and this you can wear all your life. (pretty soon we will put out a greek edition of pax: a *fi* on war issue, while talking about nothing but birds) (*WPSHV* 258 [October 20, 1963]).

No further correspondence between Thomas Merton and Stuart Hughes concerning the details of the awards ceremony is extant. A note, mostly handwritten by Jerome Grossman, advises Stuart Hughes about some ideas that may be included in his remarks at the dinner. Grossman mentions Pope John XXIII's encyclical *Pacem in Terris* of April 1963, and notes that in his writings on war Merton "shakes us" – "jars us" – "shatters one's complacency." Appended to the note is an editorial that appeared in the August 10, 1963 issue of *The Pilot*, which mentions the nuclear test ban treaty signed by the United States and Russia on August 5, 1963 that would go into effect on October 10, 1963, ten days before the PAX prize was awarded; the editorial recalled August 6, 1945, the day that the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, and saw the signing of the historic treaty as a symbol of both repentance and liberation: repentance for the horrible deed and, hopefully, liberation from further use of atomic and nuclear weapons.¹⁶

The *Harvard Crimson* provided a preview of the upcoming event in its October 16 edition: Freshman Senator Gaylord Nelson (D-Wisc.) will discuss disarmament prospects at the annual dinner sponsored by Political Action for Peace (PAX) at the Continental

Hotel Oct. 20. Participants in the program will include H. Stuart Hughes, professor of History, William Alfred, professor of English, and Martin Peretz, teaching fellow in Government. The PAX Peace Prize will be awarded in absentia to Thomas Merton, a Trappist monk who has written widely about the moral issues of peace and war. Tickets are available at 44 Brattle St (*Crimson*, October 16, 1963).

In the program for the dinner, the following invitation was extended:

Massachusetts Political Action for Peace and Mrs. Copley Amory, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Baskin, Rev. and Mrs. James P. Breeden, Dr. and Mrs. Stanley Cobb, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence E. Cooke, Mr. and Mrs. Gardner Cox, Mr. and Mrs. Noel Day, Dr. and Mrs. Jacob Finey, Mr. and Mrs. Allan Forbes, Jr., Rabbi Roland B. Gittelsohn, Hon. William P. Homans, Jr., Prof. and Mrs. Mark DeW. Howe, Bishop W. Appleton Lawrence, Dr. and Mrs. Erich Lindemann, Louis M. Lyons, Charles E. Merrill, Rt. Rev. Edward G. Murray, Hon. Mary B. Newman, Alfred Olerio, Mrs. David Riesman invite You To Join in Honoring THOMAS MERTON (Father Louis, O.C.S.O. of the Abbey of Gethsemani) At The Presentation Of The First Annual PAX PEACE PRIZE. Sunday Evening, Hotel Continental Ballroom, Cambridge, Massachusetts. October 20, 1963. Reception at 6:00 P.M. Supper at 7:00 P.M.¹⁷

The citation for the award read: “The Pax Peace Prize awarded to Thomas Merton: In Recognition of the Inspired Writing in which He has Impressed on the Consciences of Men of Good Will the Moral Imperative of Opposition to Thermonuclear War.”¹⁸ The presentation was made by H. Stuart Hughes and accepted on behalf of Thomas Merton by the Rt. Rev. George W. Casey, pastor of St. Bridget’s Church in Lexington, Massachusetts, who then read Merton’s acceptance speech, entitled, “In Acceptance of the Pax Medal, 1963” (*NVA* 257-58).¹⁹ In the speech Merton reiterated his stand on the banning of nuclear weapons: “[T]he arms race ought to cease . . . nuclear weapons should be banned . . . an effective program of gradual disarmament should be agreed upon by all nations’ and this as soon as possible because the danger of global war remains always proximate and imminent, ‘and nothing is lost by peace, yet everything may be lost by war’” (*NVA* 257). Merton celebrates the peace efforts of Pope John XXXIII, declaring:

Pacem in Terris is a magnificent document. . . . By accepting [the Pax Peace Prize] I am publicly affirming that *Pacem in Terris* as I understand it was written in order to prevent nuclear war, and indeed to rule out all further consideration of war as a reasonable and just means of settling international disputes. As a consequence *Pacem in Terris* is a reminder to the conscience of every reasonable human being on the face of the earth that each one of us has a strict obligation to work for world peace, for the peaceful arbitration of all disputes, and for the peaceful settlement of the social, international, interracial, religious, economic and political problems in which we may be directly or indirectly involved (*NVA* 258).

The program also included major addresses by Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin and Professor Seymour Melman of Columbia University, along with Professor William Alfred, Harvard University poet and playwright, reading from the writings of Thomas Merton. The best coverage of the event appeared in a suburban newspaper, *The Attleboro Sun*, where the story appeared on Tuesday, October 22, 1963. The headline of the story by Gustave Jacobson was “FIRST PAX PEACE PRIZE IS AWARDED TO AUTHOR.” Jacobson wrote:

Sunday night in Cambridge, members and friends of a political party which is less than a year old met at a . . . modest \$5-a-plate dinner as part of their efforts designed primarily not to beat another party or candidate but to win the peace. About 400 persons gathered in the ballroom of the Hotel Continental in Cambridge at a dinner meeting sponsored by the Massachusetts Political Action for Peace, at which the first annual Pax Peace Prize was awarded in absentia to the well-known author of spiritual writings, Thomas Merton (Father Louis, O.C.S.O. of the Abbey of Gethsemani). H. Stuart Hughes, history professor at Harvard University presented the prize to Rt. Rev. George W. Casey of Lexington. The prize was awarded to Merton "In recognition of the inspired writings in which he has impressed on the consciences of men of good will the moral imperative of opposition on thermonuclear war." Eleven months ago Prof. Hughes, running as an independent candidate for the U.S. Senate against Edward M. Kennedy and George Cabot Lodge, was defeated. Hughes' candidacy was marked by a concern for issues, peace, primarily. As one Boston University professor of English remarked in conversation before the start of Sunday night's dinner, the mood of the country has changed between the time Hughes ran and the awarding of the Pax Peace Prize. There is now in effect a limited nuclear war test ban. The United States is engaged in more dialogue with the Russians (*Sun*, October 22, 1963).

The article continues with an account of the speakers, description of the attendees and quotes from letters sent by influential people of the day:

Sunday night Sen. Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin, the principal speaker, and Seymour Melman, professor of industrial engineering at Columbia University noted there are more changes to come, that have to come. The audience included professors, businessman, clergy-men, nuns, workers in the Negro civil rights movement, housewives and political candidates (including those from other parties). Prof. William Alfred, Harvard poet and playwright, read two poems written by Merton, one showing a "preoccupation" with social justice, the other a "preoccupation" with peace. Letters and telegrams from important battlers for peace were read to the audience by Martin Peretz, the toastmaster. Lord Bertrand Russell, Nobel prize winner, wrote in part: "I am delighted to join with you in honoring the good Father Thomas Merton and to communicate my greetings to Stuart Hughes, Sen. Nelson and the assembled friends of peace in Massachusetts. The future now appears hopeful, more hopeful at least than a year ago, but it requires our increased energies and continued fidelity." Linus Pauling of California, who recently was named as a Nobel Peace Prize winner, wrote "The struggle is not over. The bomb test treaty is a great step forward. But it must be followed by more treaties that will decrease the danger of a catastrophic war." John Lewis of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, writing from a jail cell in Selma, Alabama, noted: "It is understood by ever greater numbers in Jackson and Selma, in Americus and Birmingham, in Greenville and Danville, I dare say in Harlem and Roxbury, that the achievement of civil rights is dependent on an expanding and rational economy and that these in turn depend on a world at peace" (*Sun*, October 22, 1963).

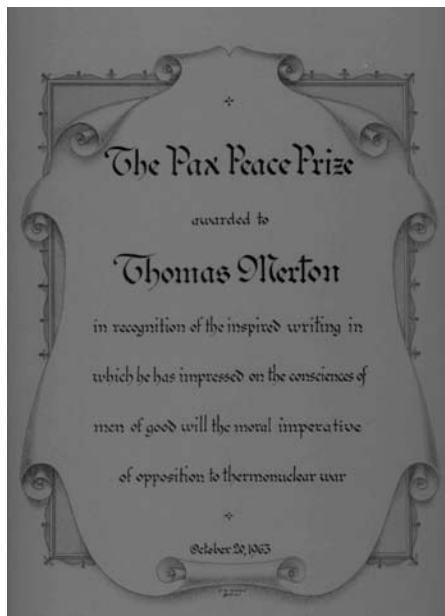
The article quotes excerpts from Merton's acceptance speech as read by Msgr. Casey, including the following: "I repeat, I don't think I deserve a medal for affirming such obvious and commonsense truths. But if by receiving the medal I can publicly declare these [bring an end to the arms race and work for world peace] to be my convictions, then I most gladly and gratefully accept" (*Sun*, October 22, 1963). The newspaper account concludes: "And that's the way it is in Cambridge. On an autumn Saturday afternoon football players from Columbia and Harvard can combat one another in friendly, physical style on the gridiron. The next evening professors from Harvard and Columbia can join with others in working for a significant peace" (*Sun*, October 22, 1963).

The *Harvard Crimson* headlined the event: "MELMAN LINKS DISARMAMENT CAUSE WITH CIVIL RIGHTS AT PAX DINNER" and went on to report:

A Columbia University professor predicted last night that civil rights groups would be backing disarmament to make "the conversion to a peace-time economy" an issue in 1964. Seymour Melman, professor of engineering at Columbia explained that without job opportunities Negroes could not achieve equality. . . . While producing weapons to destroy the U.S.S.R. 231 times over, the United States has failed to keep its underlying industrial machinery up-to-date, so that it is today . . . "the center of technological stagnation" among the developed nations of the world. . . . Gaylord Nelson (D-Wis.) . . . urged PAX to continue its efforts at an examination of issues. Martin Peretz, teaching fellow in Government, presiding at the four-hour-long gathering, urged its membership to dedicate themselves to "new politics in Massachusetts." PAX, an outgrowth of the campaign of H. Stuart Hughes for Senate, will run peace candidates for state and local offices (*Crimson*, Oct 21, 1963).

The day after the award dinner, Msgr. Casey sent a letter to Thomas Merton in which he stated:

I am enclosing here with [*sic*] the Prize awarded for your ealy [*sic*] opposition to nuclear warfare and for enlightened pleas for peace. The dinner at which it was presented was surprisingly well attended, over 400. And a more heterogeneous group you never saw. I would think that 85% were Jewish and Protestant but you will be pleased to know that there [*sic*] four sisters of the order of St. Joseph, here in the *Archdiocese*, in attendance. A most informative talk was given by Seymour Melman, of Columbia, with impressive figures, to prove the utter necessity of moving our resources out of *armament*. Senator Nelson of Wisconsin was completely beguiling, a most pleasing personality. Stuart Hughes asked me particularly to extend his congratulations and good wishes. He insists that he has read everything that you have ever written. He is very gentle and sincere. Some domestic problems weigh upon his spirit so he accomplished no



flight of rhetoric but his genuineness [*sic*] won his audience. Professor Alfred read two moving excerpts from your work and the whole affair evolved into a testimonial to you and Stuart Hughes, as well as a celebration of the Test Bann [*sic*] Treaty. Mr. Thomas McDonnell, who worked with you on the Thomas Merton Reader was there and we had a pleasant discussion on the Reader and your other works. I may say here that I reviewed *The Sign of Jonas* for the Boston Herald, years ago it seems. So I was acquainted with you, as most of your friends are, through the medium of books. An Attleboro reporter asked for your speech, which I read as is. If I get a printing of it I will send it to you and keep the original for a souvenir.²⁰

After the award ceremony, both Thomas Merton and H. Stuart Hughes continued their strong advocacy for peace. Hughes lived some thirty years beyond Thomas Merton, dying in 1999. PAX continued its work through the 1960s²¹ and in December 1972 merged with another organization, Citizens for Participation Politics, to form Citizens for Participation in Political Action (CPPAX), which continues to the present day. In his retirement as a professor emeritus in San Diego, Hughes writes as “an elderly gentleman” in his memoirs:

About twice a month I attend a lunch meeting devoted to matters nuclear and related threats to the peace, in a series initiated by a veteran and benevolent arms-control specialist on our faculty, Herbert York. The other participants are drawn from at least a dozen academic disciplines, plus assorted high-tech executives and retired diplomats, generals, admirals. The speakers are equally varied: early on, I delivered my thoughts (still unrepentantly unilateral!) three weeks before Edward Teller appeared to expound the very opposite. The juxtaposition epitomizes the ideological range of the attendance. Along with several of the younger faculty and two or three profoundly worried physicians, I occupy the extreme left flank (Hughes 314).

H. Stuart Hughes, who had never met Thomas Merton, was instrumental in awarding him the PAX Peace Prize. Although only a handful of letters was exchanged between the two men, Hughes insisted that he read everything Merton had published. Hughes, evidently, recognized Merton’s deep passion for peace – a passion that Hughes himself strongly felt and defended without compromise. One can only conjecture what H. Stuart Hughes was thinking on the evening of October 20, 1963 when Msgr. Casey read the acceptance speech by Thomas Merton, including these words:

Pacem in Terris is a reminder to the conscience of every reasonable human being on the face of the earth that each one of us has a strict obligation to work for world peace, for the peaceful arbitration of all disputes, and for the peaceful settlement of the social, international, interracial, religious, economic and political problems in which we may be directly or indirectly involved (*NVA* 258).

1. Michael Mott, *The Seven Mountains of Thomas Merton* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984) 392.
2. In November 1961 Merton contacted the British PAX Society, a Catholic peace group founded in 1936, and became a sponsor of the group and a contributor to its journal, the *PAX Bulletin*. For Merton’s relationship with the group, see Valerie Flessati, “Thomas Merton and Pax Christi,” in *Making Peace in the Post-Christian Era: Thomas Merton’s Challenge to the War on Terror* (London: Pax Christi, 2006) 2-8; see also Merton’s correspondence with Charles S. Thompson, editor of the *PAX Bulletin* (39-54; most of Merton’s side of the correspondence is also found in Thomas Merton, *The Hidden Ground of Love: Letters on Religious Experience and Social Concerns*, ed. William H. Shannon [New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1985] 571-75; subsequent references will be cited as “HGL” parenthetically in the text; the September 27, 1962 letter to Thompson is also found in Thomas Merton, *Cold War Letters*, ed. William H. Shannon and Christine M. Bochen [Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2006] 184-85 [#105]; subsequent references will be cited

as “*CWL*” parenthetically in the text). In 1971 the PAX Society merged with the British section of Pax Christi, the international Catholic peace group founded in 1945. In late 1961 Merton became a sponsor, along with his friends Robert Lax and Edward Rice, of the newly formed American PAX Association, an affiliate of the British group (see Thomas Merton, *Turning Toward the World: The Pivotal Years. Journals, vol. 4: 1960-1963*, ed. Victor A. Kramer [San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1996] 181 [November 20, 1961]) and mentioned the group in his essays “Christian Ethics and Nuclear War,” first published in *The Catholic Worker* in March 1962, and in its revised version, “Religion and the Bomb,” first published in *Jubilee* in May 1962 (Thomas Merton, *Passion for Peace: The Social Essays*, ed. William H. Shannon [New York: Crossroad, 1995] 58, 75). The American group struggled somewhat in its opening phase (see Merton’s letters to Dorothy Day [*HGL* 144-45 (April 9, 1962), 147 (August 11, 1962)]), but survived and eventually, like its British counterpart, became part of Pax Christi; Merton’s final peace essay, “Peace and Revolution: A Footnote from Ulysses,” written in July 1968 (Thomas Merton, *The Other Side of the Mountain: The End of the Journey. Journals, vol. 7: 1967-1968*, ed. Patrick Hart [San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1998] 142) was written for and published in *American Pax* (Thomas Merton, *The Literary Essays of Thomas Merton*, ed. Patrick Hart, OCSO [New York: New Directions, 1981] 23-28: see the note on page 23; also in Thomas Merton, *The Nonviolent Alternative*, ed. Gordon C. Zahn [New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1980] 70-75; subsequent references will be cited as “*NVA*” parenthetically in the text). It has sometimes been mistakenly assumed that the PAX Peace Prize was presented to Merton by this American PAX Association (see Jim Forest, *Living with Wisdom: A Life of Thomas Merton* [Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1991] 147). *Pax* was also the name of Robert Lax’s poetry broadside, published irregularly beginning in 1955 (see James Harford, *Merton & Friends: A Joint Biography of Thomas Merton, Robert Lax, and Edward Rice* [New York: Crossroad, 2006] 87-88, 126, 239); Merton himself will humorously play on the identity of the names in a letter to Lax after receiving the peace prize – see below.

3. See *The Attleboro Sun*, October 22, 1963 (Boston Public Library, Microtext Department); subsequent references will be cited as “*Sun*” parenthetically in the text.
4. H. Stuart Hughes, *An Approach to Peace* (New York: Atheneum, 1962) 21.
5. *New York Times*, October 24, 1999.
6. *Perspectives* (American Historical Association Website) March, 2000; subsequent references will be cited as “*Perspectives*” parenthetically in the text.
7. H. Stuart Hughes, *Gentleman Rebel: Memoirs of H. Stuart Hughes* (New York: Ticknor & Fields, 1990); subsequent references will be cited as “*Hughes*” parenthetically in the text.
8. Letter from Hughes to Merton, November 23, 1962 (Thomas Merton Center, Bellarmine University, Louisville, KY; subsequent references will be cited as “*TMC*” parenthetically in the text; permission for citations from Hughes’ correspondence granted by Judith Hughes).
9. Letter from Thomas Merton to Artists and Writers for Hughes, 1962 (Houghton Library, Harvard University: MS Am 1842(15), Series II; quoted by permission of the Merton Legacy Trust). This file consists of letters librarian Walter Grossman received from painters, poets, and composers from around the country in response to his request for donations of drawings and manuscripts for the auction to benefit the 1962 Hughes campaign, and also includes form letters and postcards sent out by Grossman for the committee, the auction catalogue, and a few clippings. Presumably Merton’s drawing included verses, which would be the poem Hughes mentions. Merton’s “Letter to Pablo Antonio Cuadra concerning Giants” was published in February 1962 in *Blackfriars*, and in abridged form as “Conquistador, Tourist, and Indian” in July 1962 in *Good Work*.
10. “Hughes for Senate Committee” (January 8, 1963) 1-2 (Yale University Library, H. Stuart Hughes Papers, MS1446, Box 6, Folder 139) (permission for quotations granted by Judith Hughes); subsequent references will be cited as “*Prospectus*” parenthetically in the text. William Hefner was the defeated Democratic candidate for Congress in the First District of Massachusetts during the November, 1962 elections. Elizabeth Boardman came close to winning the Republican Congressional nomination for the Third District of Massachusetts (*The Harvard Crimson*, Online Edition [January 30, 1963]; subsequent references will be cited as “*Crimson*” parenthetically in the text).
11. Letter from Thomas Merton to Stuart Hughes (TMC).
12. Allan Forbes, “An Essay on the Arms Race,” *Breakthrough to Peace: Twelve Views on the Threat of Thermonuclear Extermination*, Introduction by Thomas Merton (New York: New Directions, 1962) 172-91. In none of the extant letters of the Merton-Forbes correspondence is there any mention of the possibility of his accepting the PAX award on Merton’s behalf (see *CWL* 126-27, 136-37, 171-73 [##65, 72, 97]).
13. Thomas Merton, *A Thomas Merton Reader*, ed. Thomas P. McDonnell (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1962); rev. ed. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Image, 1974). There is no mention in any extant correspondence with McDonnell of his accepting the Pax Peace Prize on Merton’s behalf.

14. Thomas Merton and James Laughlin, *Selected Letters*, ed. David D. Cooper (New York: Norton, 1997) 224; subsequent references will be cited as “SL” parenthetically in the text.
15. Thomas Merton and Robert Lax, *When Prophecy Still Had a Voice: The Letters of Thomas Merton & Robert Lax*, ed. Arthur W. Biddle (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001) 251; subsequent references will be cited as “WPSHV” parenthetically in the text.
16. Letter from Jerome Grossman to Hughes, September 11, 1963 (Yale University Library: H. Stuart Hughes Papers, MS1446, Box 6, Folder 139). Grossman was campaign chairman for Hughes during the 1962 Senatorial contest (Hughes 255).
17. Awards Dinner Program, October 20, 1963 (TMC). It should be noted that there are two versions of the program for the award ceremony. The briefer version quoted here does not include the specific menu for dinner, list of organizers for the award ceremony, partial list of patrons, greetings from Rev. Dr. John Paul Jones, chairman, advisory committee, Massachusetts PAX.
18. The citation now hangs outside the office door of Dr. Paul M. Pearson, Director and Archivist of the Thomas Merton Center, Bellarmine University, Louisville, Kentucky.
19. Though the title of Merton’s acceptance speech, as well as some of his letters, mentions a medal, he is apparently mistaken: none of the other documentation concerning the award mentions a medal, nor is there any medal in the archives at the Merton Center or at the Abbey of Gethsemani.
20. Msgr. George V. Casey to Thomas Merton (TMC). “Popularly known as Driftwood Casey because of his *Pilot* column by that name. Monsignor George V. Casey (ex’ 16) was a familiar figure in many households not only because of the ‘Driftwood’ column (which appeared weekly in the *Pilot* for 30 years) but also because of a column he contributed to the *Boston Herald* for six years. During World War II he served as an army chaplain in the European Theater of Operations. After the war he did graduate study at Harvard under the G.I. Bill. He was pastor of St. Bridget’s Parish in Lexington [Massachusetts] from 1949 until his retirement in 1972. Boston College conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters on Monsignor Casey in 1971. He died in 1983 at age 87” (Charles F. Donovan, SJ, *Boston College’s Boston Priests: An Account of Boston College Men Who Became Priests of the Archdiocese of Boston, 1877-1993* [Office of University Historian: Rev. Charles F. Donovan Occasional Papers, Boston College, 1993] 23). Presumably Msgr. Casey was chosen to accept the award by someone from Boston rather than by Merton; perhaps it was thought more appropriate to have a clergyman rather than a layperson receive the award on behalf of a priest-monk.
21. A second PAX Peace Prize was awarded by the group on March 7, 1969 to Sen. Ernest Gruening of Alaska, one of only two U.S. senators to vote against the Tonkin Gulf Resolution of August, 1964 authorizing expanded use of military force in Vietnam. There is no evidence of any further awards being made by PAX. Information courtesy of Archives and Special Collections, Healey Library, University of Massachusetts, Boston.