

# THE LAFF SOCIETY

For the men and women engaged in Life After the Ford Foundation

Fall 2002

NO. 32

## *The LAFFing Parade*

**Bryant George** (National Affairs), retired, is Senior Technical Advisor and Secretary of Counterpart International, a technical assistance organization that works in Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Vietnam, and some African countries. Counterpart International, 1200 18<sup>th</sup> St. NW, Washington 20036-2561.

**Gus Ranis** (Overseas Development, 1958-59) has been reappointed Henry R. Luce Director of the Yale Center for International and Area Studies. The Center, which was founded with Ford grants, in 1961. It offers majors in African, East Asian, Latin American, and Russian studies as well as a major in ethnicity, race, and migration. Ranis was also director of the Economic Growth Center, also established with Ford Foundation funds. (See p. 3 for his recollection of how he came to the Foundation).

**Henry Saltzman** is assisting in a campaign to raise \$10 million for a national memorial, museum, and educational center dedicated to the more than 21,000 Israeli soldiers who died in the country's various wars. The funds will match a similar amount from the Ministry of Finance. The project will be built on the highest mountain outside of Jerusalem, overlooking a valley on the other side of which is Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial. Anyone wishing to know more and to get help in arrangements to visit the site should get in touch with  
(cont. on p. 2)

## LAFF Society's New President

**Emmett D. Carson**, president of the Minneapolis Foundation, has been named president of The LAFF Society, succeeding Siobhan Oppenheimer Nicolau,

who has held the office since 1997.

A Ph.D. in public and international affairs from Princeton, Emmett joined the Foundation in 1994, and was the first manager of its \$10 million international and U.S. grantmaking programs to make the philanthropy and the nonprofit sector stronger. Prior to that he oversaw grants to black colleges, youth leadership development and



civil rights organizations in minority rights and opportunity.

Before Ford, he was project director of a study on black philanthropy at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. He has also taught at the University of Maryland and prepared analyses and drafted legislation for the Congressional Research Service.

He became president of the Minneapolis Foundation, one of the country's oldest and largest community foundations in 1994.

Among his many awards, he has been in *The Nonprofit Times* Top 50 List of Power and Influence, a James Joseph Lecturer of the Association of Black Foundation Executives, leader presenter at the First White House Conference on Philanthropy, and Distinguished Lecturer at the Georgetown University Center for the Study of Voluntary Organizations. He is on the boards of the Southern Education Foundation, the Council on Foundations, and the Indiana University Center for the Study of Philanthropy. He has written many books and articles on philanthropy and the nonprofit sector, most recently "A Crisis of Identity for Community Foundations," on *The State of Philanthropy 2002* (Washington: National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy).

### The LAFF Society

c/o Mary Camper-Titsingh  
531 Main Street, Apt. #1110  
New York, NY 10044

President, Emmett Carson  
Secretary-Treasurer, Mary Camper-Titsingh

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Christine Vincent

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Graphic Designer, Ruth Neumann

## New Advisors

Welcome to three new members of the Advisory Board:

John Gerhart, president, American University in Cairo;

Lillian Trager, Professor of Anthropology, University of Wisconsin;

Christine Vincent, president, Maine College of Art, Portland.

## The LAFFing Parade

(cont. from p.1)

Henry, 330 Seventh Avenue, New York 10001, (212)244-4414, or Hsalz@mindspring.com.

To illuminate and address animosity between religious communities and increased religious conflict, **David Smock** has recently produced two books, published by the U.S. Institute of Peace Press. In the first, which he edited, is entitled "Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding." Drawing on their extensive experience in organizing interaction and cooperation across religious boundaries in the Middle East, Africa, Southeast Asia, Northern Ireland, and the Balkans,

eight Christian, Muslim and Jewish contributors explore the potential of interfaith dialogue. The second book, which Smock authored, is entitled "Religious Perspectives on War: Christian, Muslim and Jewish Attitudes Toward Force." He has also recently produced two reports on Islam for the Institute.

The original building of the Fashion Institute of Technology, a branch of the State University of New York, was built in 1959 and later named after the late president of the Institute, **Marvin Feldman**, who became president there after serving in the Education Division of the Ford Foundation. The Marvin Feldman Center, as it is called, is being renovated as part of a major construction project at the Institute, which is located in New York City's Garment District. It will include two new buildings.

## Diversity in Foundations

The lack of diversity on the staffs and boards of philanthropic organizations may impede the field's ability to respond effectively to the needs of diverse communities, according to a report by a coalition of grantmaker associations. In a foreword, **Emmett C. Carson**, president of the Minneapolis Foundation and new president of The LAFF Society, says the report "opens a new chapter in the study of foundation diversity because it examines the whole picture rather than focusing on an individual disparity. Foundations have a great opportunity to increase the responsiveness and accountability to the communities they serve by consciously focusing their efforts on

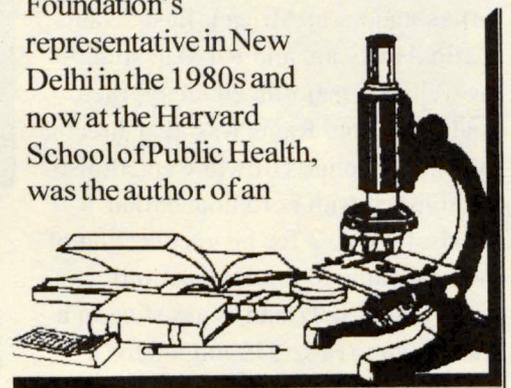
enhancing board and staff diversity."

According to the findings, philanthropy has evolved over the past two decades from a field dominated by white men to a field where women comprise the majority of paid staff and a fifth of staff are people of color. However, the composition of boards has not changed significantly in terms of diversity, and barriers based on disability, ethnicity and race, and gender and sexual orientation persist.

The report, which included surveys, interviews, and focus groups involved more than 600 grantmakers nationwide, was funded by the Ford, Rockefeller, and Evelyn and Walter Haas Jr. foundations.

## Can AIDS Be Stopped?

**Lincoln Chen**, the Foundation's representative in New Delhi in the 1980s and now at the Harvard School of Public Health, was the author of an



article under the above title in *The New York Review of Books*. His fellow author was Helen Epstein, a molecular biologist who has written extensively for various publications about public-health problems in Africa.

Epstein and Chen focused on the AIDS crisis in sub-Saharan Africa, and summarized their answer to the above question in the following para-

(cont. on p. 3)



## Reunion '03!

The Fourth Gala Reunion of The LAFF Society will be held next November, tentatively Friday, Nov 7. Place, time and other details will follow.

Since the cozy National Arts Club may not be available, anyone with a suggestion of a pleasant, and not wildly expensive, locale please get in touch with Pat Corrigan, at patpeg@web.tv.net or (201) 768-7902.

(cont. from p. 2

graphs emphasizing the continent's non-medical needs:

“Addressing the AIDS crisis in Africa will require an emphasis on more than antiretroviral drugs alone, important as they are. What sub-Saharan Africa seems to need even more than it needs AIDS drugs is the improvement of its health care systems, the creation of livelihoods for families impoverished by AIDS illnesses and deaths, and the alleviation of the loneliness, poverty, and despair that are likely to motivate risky sexual behavior. . . . Until scientists discover an effective vaccine to prevent HIV infection, sustained relief from the African AIDS epidemic may depend on the subcontinent's social and economic stability, which in turn will depend on better governance by Africa's leaders.

“But it will also depend critically on greater support for Africa from the international community, which could

## How I Came to the Ford Foundation

*This is another installment in a series that has become one of the most popular features of The LAFF Society newsletters. Readers are strongly encouraged to submit recollections of their own experience. Please use e-mail if possible, to atolles@snet.net*

by GUSTAVE RANIS

In the spring of 1957, Al Wolf visited Yale, where I was an instructor in economics, having recently returned from a year in Japan, where I did my dissertation in development economics. Robert Triffin introduced me to Wolf, but I was still undecided as to whether to stay in “the real world” of academia (as Jim Tobin advised me) or get the taste of another world. In the event I came close to taking a job as an economist with Stanvac in White Plains but then called Wolf to see if the Ford job was still open. I chose Ford not just because it doubled my princely \$4500 salary but because I thought it represented a half-way house between academia and business.

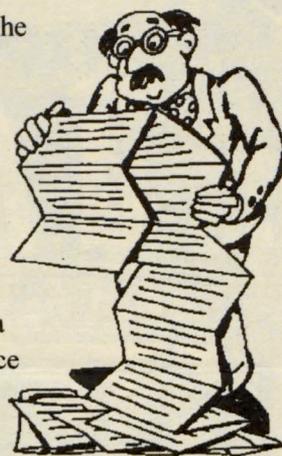
So I ended up working with Carlton Wood on India under the overall command of Frosty Hill (F.F. Hill, vice president for Overseas Development) but pretty much at the beck and call of Doug Ensminger's (representative in India) purple prose. A year later, I was shipped off to Ford's Pakistan office, working first for George Gant and subsequently Bob Culbertson, as assistant director watching over economics-related projects.

Six months later, one of these projects, the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, ran into a crisis, i.e., the Joint Director provided by Ford failed to have his thesis accepted somewhere in Canada. I was asked to fill in, came to dinner, and ended up staying for two years as “Director of the Joint,” with Emile Despres in overall charge from Williams College, then Stanford. I have since maintained contact with both the children of PIDE, its namesake in Islamabad and the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

I was subsequently recruited by Lloyd Reynolds at Yale—and the rest is history. Working at the Foundation, first directly and then heading one of its major development research projects, proved extremely important to my subsequent academic as well as public policy career. I am grateful.

begin by establishing fairer terms of trade for African farmers and debt relief programs that are not tied to the same harsh conditions such as underinvestment in African institutions, especially those devoted to health and

education, and reduced government support for nascent African business enterprises that need to be nurtured—that have combined with local corruption and mismanagement to undermine African development.”



## Socrates at the Ford Foundation

by RONALD GROSS

Ronald Gross worked in the Foundation's Education Program from 1960 – 1965. He now co-chairs the University Seminar on Innovation in Education at Columbia University. He has just published his 23rd book, *Socrates' Way*.



I first met Socrates in the halls of the Ford Foundation at 477 Madison Avenue in 1960.

He took the form of my boss, Alvin Eurich, head of the Education Division and VP of the Fund for the Advancement of Education. Eurich interviewed me for my job through a series of Socratic questions – a practice he later explained that he'd learned from Bob Hutchins, who had given Eurich a little portrait bust of Socrates that sat on his desk.

"Let's talk about what education really is," Eurich invited in our first talk.

Then he just sat and blinked at me, like Socrates dialoguing with a dim Athenian in the *agora* 2,500 years ago.

"School... college... graduate school... professional training..." I stammered.

"Is that where you learned the things that are most important to you?" he inquired.

"Well, not really...."

This was not going well.

Eurich mercifully threw me a verbal life-preserver. "How did you learn how to do what you seem to do so well..." he said, glancing down at my resume on his desk. "How did you learn the things that you most enjoy knowing and understanding?"

I could see there was no "correct" answer. He really wanted to know what I thought.

"I learned them on my own. Through reading. From people who were masters in the field... Oh– I also like to borrow filmed lectures from the library (this was before videotapes), and screen them at home."

"Ah," said Eurich-Socrates. "Then in your own experience, Education isn't what most people think it is."

"Yes," I acknowledged, feebly.

"What's the difference?"

"My own real learning hasn't been in classrooms. It's been more independent, using different resources."

"Interesting... very interesting. Now, let's look at how other people learn the things they most need to know. Let me ask you another question..."

In this initial interview, Eurich had demonstrated the Socratic skills and strategies needed to work with applicants and colleagues, such as asking sharp questions, thinking for yourself, and freeing your mind from stereotypes. He had also instilled in my mind a new conception of what education might be – a translation to our own day of the classical Greek conception of *paideia*: lifelong, society-wide education.

I applied these principles during the several years I worked for Eurich at the Foundation. Moreover, they formed the basis of some of our most significant funding.

In quest of a “new” model of Education — one based on self-directed learning and the use of a wide range of resources — we traveled to the U.K. and Israel to check out their “Open Universities,” and then supported similar American initiatives like the University Without Walls, Empire State College, and the earliest uses of television and computers for instruction.

*Socrates’ Way* portrays the “gadfly” doing these things in classical Athens, profiles how people in our own time have used the same principles, including physicist Richard Feynman and psychologist Carl Jung, and offers intellectual exercises to master Socratic strategies for using your mind to the utmost.

Now, I’m planning to have Socrates turn up in the Foundation’s atrium one morning soon, to greet some of our successors at the Foundation as they arrive for work — and ask them a few pointed questions about how *they* are running the shop.

## FF to UN to 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

After leaving the Foundation in 1971, Steve Baldwin embarked on a career in the population field, including service at the Population Council on policy issues, with an emphasis on Asia. He joined the United Nations Population Division in 1978 and spent 21 years developing training programs in population and development in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.

After the UN, he became an

arbitrator and mediator, continuing the kind of work he had done part-time *pro bono* at the UN. He and a former law school classmate set up a small company, Prefix, specializing in solving employment sector discrimination programs before they go to the litigation stage.

After writing his autobiography, Steve reports, “I got restless” and became a New York Teaching Fellow. He has been teaching Third Grade in a South Bronx public school since January 2001 and attending Hunter College to obtain a master’s degree in Elementary Education—47 credits worth.

Teaching, he states, “is the toughest job I’ve ever had, but in many ways the most rewarding (when it is...these are not easy kids to get to).”

Steve and his wife Barbara Radloff, a former journalist and foundation officer, have twin sons and a daughter, and he has two from a previous marriage. 110 Riverside Dr., New York, N.Y. 10024.

## Supporting Human Rights

A new book on human rights describes the Foundation’s role in establishing a major human rights group—Helsinki Watch, which evolved in Human Rights Watch. The author—Jeri Laber was a founder and for many years executive director of Helsinki Watch. Her book, *The Courage of Strangers: Coming of Age with the Human Rights Movement* (Public Affairs) bears a foreword by Vaclav Havel, the dissident playwright who became president of Czechoslovakia.

The first Ford grant was engineered by former Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg, who was

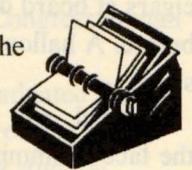
leader of the U.S. delegation to the disappointing first conference to review the historic 1975 Helsinki agreement. Another actor was Robert Bernstein, publisher of Random House, who was founder of the Fund for Free Expression, an earlier Foundation grantee for which Laber was a consultant. Her new role in part reflected her disenchantment with the way Amnesty International worked on the issue of political prisoners. Goldberg got McGeorge Bundy to meet with Bernstein and Laber. At the meeting, in 1978, “Bundy clearly liked the idea of a U.S. Helsinki Watch and seemed eager to push it through before his forthcoming retirement from the Foundation,” Laber writes. Following a planning grant, the Committee received a \$400,000 grant in January 1979. She also cites support from the MacArthur Foundation.

*The Courage of Strangers* describes Laber’s secret trips across closed borders, where she met with the most courageous activists and dissenters of the time—Havel, Yuri Orlov, Andrei Sakharov, Adam Michnik, Rita Kelimova and others.

## Information, Please

For a new edition of The LAFF Society Directory, please send name corrections or additions to Dorothy Nixon, 201 Adelaid St., Belleville, N.J. 07109 or [Nixodo@umdnj.edu](mailto:Nixodo@umdnj.edu). Include your e-mail address if possible.

Copies will be available early next year from Mary Camper-Titsingh, 511 Main St., Apt. 1110, New York, N.Y. 10044. Checks for \$3.50 should be made out to The LAFF Society.



# In Re Cigars

by ROBERT TOLLES

Sporting his Princeton baseball cap (no disloyalty intended to his alma maters NYU and Columbia Law School, just a proud recognition of grandson Adam having graduated this spring from that university),

**Howard Dressner** has been musing of late on incidents occurring at Ford board meetings when **Alex Heard** was chairman. One he has labeled the "Cigar Crisis."

At one such meeting in 1979 two non-smoking trustees (**Nina Garsoian and Harriet Rabb**—among the first women to serve on that once all-male board) protested the smoking of cigars at meetings.

As secretary, Dressner's job was to assure that meetings ran smoothly, even to arranging the passing out of cigars at board dinners the night before. A hallowed tradition was at stake.

Heard, ever nonplussed even in the face of imminent danger, turned to the secretary and asked, "Isn't there some rule about smoking in Foundation conference rooms?"

"Yes, sir," replied Dressner. "Among the rules adopted by management in April 1975 after extensive staff discussion about the rights and wrongs of smokers and non-smokers was the following:

'Smoking in conference rooms will generally be restricted unless all those present agree to the contrary. The chairperson of meetings should be

responsible for ascertaining whether or not smoking is to be allowed during meetings.'

Pressing on, Heard asked "How come the rule has not been applied here?"

Replied Dressner: "To the best of my recollection, management decided that trustees would have to make their own rules."

This point was confirmed by later discovery of a **David Bell** memo of January 24, 1974 to the effect

that trustees would have to establish their own guidelines.

Heard, not wanting to prolong the issue, "artfully ruled that the matter of Garsoian and Rabb v. Cigars should be tabled and taken under advisement during the winter season by the Honorable Chair and the Home Secretary," says Dressner. "Then, as one or two trustees glowered darkly through cigar smoke, the chair gaveled the proceedings to a swift adjournment."

Over succeeding months, Dressner offered various options to Heard. 1) Tough it out. At the next meeting, "just jut your jaw and say the rule doesn't apply to trustees;" 2) Ignore the whole business in the hope that the petitioners will forget they ever brought up the matter; 3) Invoke the staff rule which, in effect, would

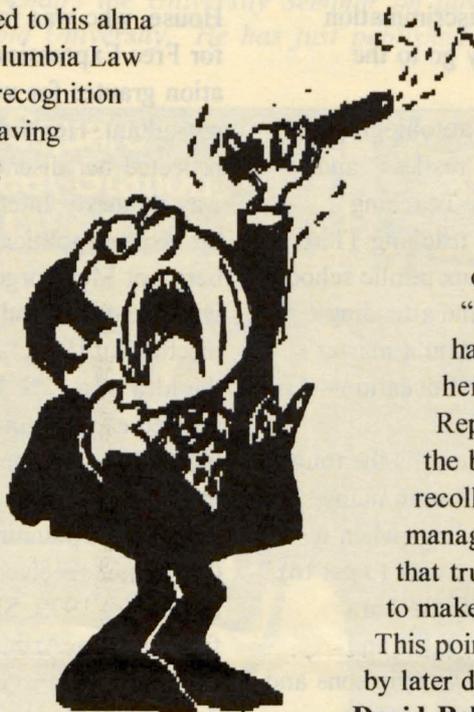
result in a cigar-smoking ban. Given the fact that there appeared to be only two cigar-smokers on the board, "you would still command enough votes in a non-smoke-filled room to win another term as chairman."

Other options: Appoint the two cigar-smokers to a Fair Smoking Subcommittee, with subcommittee meetings to take place on Level C; appoint the two protestors as chairpersons of a task force that would seek a solution that would reconcile freedom and breathing; lay the Surgeon General's latest report before the cigar-smokers and hope for the best; abdicate.

After considering the options, Heard wrote back: "Prompted by your memo of January 17, we now come to CIGARS. My response: Let us rig the laws of chance so that the two lady complainants are seated regularly for a while at a healthy (sic) distance from the two tobacco burners. If that does not ameliorate sufficiently, let the burden rest upon the petitioners."

To Dressner's mind, Heard's handling of a potentially disruptive incident was a small example of the wisdom, civility, and wit the former chairman brought to the affairs of the Foundation. "For 16 years, a term twice as long as that of his most durable predecessor, he displayed uncommon skill and grace in leading us to sure and common ground," says Dressner, quoting from the resolution adopted by the Board on Heard's retirement in 1987.

The denouement in the matter of the cigars? It appears that with nothing further said, the two offending trustees got the message, eventually confining their smoking, like smokers on staff, to the stairwells and other out-the-way places in the Foundation.



## On Becoming Merely Old

*(In the last issue of the LAFF newsletter, F. Champion Ward wrote an essay, "How to be Contented Though Old: The Consolations of Retirement." The following is his postscript to that essay).*

Two recent incidents have led to this final word. A resident [of the retirement community where the Wards live] in his nineties, on reading (my) prescriptions for being contented said, that though it might be found helpful by persons no older than eight, but not by him. I found this unpersuasive until I recalled the example of a centenarian who was introduced recently as "a lady who's more than a hundred years old." Her response was angry and emphatic: "So what!"

The slide often begins with the retirement of a breadwinning spouse who soon begins to realize that his homemaker finds his round-the-clock presence a mixed blessing. As she awaited the imminent retirement of her overachieving husband, a friend once wrote that she felt "as if the Marines are about to land on my beach." As for the restored Ulysses, he finds that his unquestioned standing as an authority figure is now in doubt. He may then waver between competing for the upper hand in making household decisions (pretty much a losing game) and leaving control in Penelope's hand, at a price in diminished self-esteem.

There are other rivals. If the former breadwinner's health is impaired, however slightly, he may find that sympathetic friends and descendants, who seem never to have heard the saying that "If a job is worth

doing, it is worth doing badly," insist on taking over even the tasks that he can still perform.

Loss of status may extend also to any standing as a patriarch he had once enjoyed. I once asked the wife of a hearty and jovial friend and Southern raconteur why, following an annual family reunion, he seemed a bit chap-fallen. She explained, sympathetically but not without a touch of gunmanship, that in the past he had only to open his mouth and the roomful of descendants would fall into a respectful or at least resigned silence. But this time they had gone right on talking to each other.

As this memoir comes to its end, I've managed to take my own advice. I'm without a computer, do an occasionally good deed, am often amused, and as this narrative attests, reminiscence. So I like to think that I'm not yet merely old.

## Take Pen (and PC) In Hand



Without contributions from LAFF members, this newsletter will languish.

So please send in news of yourself, other Foundation alumni, and comments and essays on any and all subjects you think would interest your fellow readers.

Dispatch them to the editor of the next issue, Bob Tolles, 91 Bickford Lane, New Canaan CT 06840. E-mail: [atolles@snet.net](mailto:atolles@snet.net).

## Punishment?

**Dorothy Nixon**, our indefatigable list keeper and mailer, reports the distressing news that a number of alumni have paid no dues as far back as 1992. Policy issue: Should they be dropped from the mailing list?

As of now, at least, these "scoff-laws" will, in the spirit of collegiality, be retained. But this is a pointed reminder that dues, as well as attention, should be paid. They are just \$7.50 a year and should go to our Secretary, Mary Camper-Titsingh, 531 Main St., Apt # 1110, New York 10044.

## In Memoriam

**Dr. Jacqueline Sutton**, wife of **Francis X. Sutton**, died July 14. She was 78 years old. In a long career of social service, Dr. Sutton served on the board of Children's Village, Dobbs Ferry, the Maxswell Institute, Bronxville, and Family Service of Westchester. She also helped found the Mediation Center of Westchester. The Westchester Board of Legislators named a day after her in 2001, and she received a certificate of appreciation from Congresswoman Nita Lowey.

Dr. Sutton was graduated from Western Reserve University, won a fellowship for graduate study at Radcliffe, and received a Ph.D. in social psychology from Harvard in 1952. The author of several scientific reports, she served as Deputy Director of the Rockefeller Conference and Study Center, Bellagio, Italy, 1990-92. She is survived by her husband, four children, and five grandchildren.

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Several Foundation staff members, past and present, attended a memorial service for her at the Children's Village on Sept.23.

### GLENN WATTS

Glenn Watts, retired president of the Communications Workers of America

(1974-1985), and former member of the Foundation's Board of Trustees, died in August. At age 82, Watts was one of the few labor leaders ever to serve on the board of a major foundation. When he left the Ford board, he was not replaced by another

labor official. Watts once recalled his service on the Ford board as a rewarding experience. He regarded it as a kind of graduate seminar, and he believed that on discussions of certain issues he provided a perspective the board might otherwise have lacked.

## THE LAFF SOCIETY

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