

Chapter 2

More Unitarian Problems in Boston and France, Connections to Cambridge's and New York's Radicals, Noel Field

While the Dubinsky-Lovestone-Strunsky-Hook group was challenging Barsky's organizations, including the Cannon-sponsored Medical Bureau, other men and another conflict important to the Unitarians began to play a role in the association's postwar crises and, eventually, Noel Field's ordeals. The men were Stephen Hole Fritchman, a Unitarian leftist, and Lawrence Davidow, an angry ex-radical and ally of Jay Lovestone ¹. The 1940 conflict was about Communist influences within the Unitarian's youth group.

Stephen Fritchman vs Davidow

Early in his life Stephen Fritchman identified with America's poor, declared himself a pacifist, and began seeking a deeper meaning to life than provided by his stressed Mid-western Quaker upbringing. In his early twenties, after a brief exploration of a business career, he turned to religion. He began as a Methodist, eventually attending the Union Theological Seminary in New York City just a few years before the then leftist but future anti-Communist Reinhold Niebuhr guided the institution. Fritchman soon felt constrained by the formalities of mainstream denominations and in the early 1930s became a Unitarian minister, marrying into a wealthy Boston Unitarian family. A usually controversial pastor, he settled in Bangor Maine. While there, his sermons and writings became increasingly secular and left-wing as he and his wife Frances were concluding that even the Unitarians were too rigid and insensitive to the nation's social problems. Stephen soon gained notoriety as a member of and spokesman for many Communist groups. He also became an early supporter and life-long friend of Edward Barsky and his organizations.

Lawrence (Lazarus) Davidow had a very different life. Born in 1895 to a Russian Yiddish-speaking Jewish merchant in Detroit, Michigan “Larry” earned a law degree while becoming an important figure in the state and the national Socialist Party--at a time when it had a quite radical platform. He soon began changing his beliefs. When extremists attempted to take-over the state’s Socialist Party after the Russian Revolution Larry led Michigan Socialist’s old-guard’s counter offensive. He did not abandon socialism, however. He aided strikers in the 1920s and early 1930s but was beginning a political journey from the Socialist to the Democratic Party, then, during the Cold War, to the Republican’s ultra-conservative right-wing.

Davidow made another profound and surprising change, a religious one, in the 1930s. The Jewish boy became a leading Michigan Unitarian. He also became the legal advisor to Jay Lovestone and Francis Henson as they guided the United Autoworkers Union’s (UAW’s) leader Homer Martin in his 1937-9 fight to ouster the union’s Communists.

Fritchman as a Radical

In Massachusetts, as Lovestone and Martin were fighting the UAW’s battles, a new phase of Stephen Fritchman’s life began. In 1938, the liberal Unitarian minister Charles Joy’s tenure as head of the Unitarian’s youth efforts ended and Fritchman was asked to replace him. Stephen left his Bangor, Maine ministry and settled in Boston. Immediately, he was plunged into a major controversy. One of Stephen’s responsibilities was the supervision of the Unitarian’s major youth group, the Young Peoples Religious Union. Stephen aligned it with the socialistic American Youth Congress (AYC), a large nation-wide umbrella organization formed in 1935 that campaigned for peace, economic, and social justice programs beyond those of the New Deal, and for the abolition of such “militaristic” requirements such as mandatory ROTC training

for college students. The AYC also combated fascism with many of its members fighting on the Republican side during the Spanish Civil War.²

With over five hundred supporting organizations and thousands of members, and the help of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, the AYC received national attention and approval until its leaders, many of whom were in the Young Communist League (the Party's youth group) convinced the AYC to continue to support the Soviet Union after the signing of the Hitler-Stalin Non-Aggression Pact. The pact and the accompanying reversal of Soviet anti-fascist operations in the United States alienated many liberals such as Roger Baldwin--and thousands of Party members who had joined during the Popular Front period. The AYC began losing most of its supporting groups and Eleanor Roosevelt withdrew her approval. When six thousand of its members conducted a February 1941 anti-draft march in the nation's capital, booing President Roosevelt because he was supporting preparedness, it seemed clear the AYC was Communist dominated.

To the dismay of many, Stephen Fritchman decided to keep the Unitarian youth group in the AYC, suggesting Unitarian approval of Stalin's 1939's pact—and that Fritchman was a fellow traveler, perhaps a Communist. Fritchman's decision was immediately condemned. In 1940, Lawrence Davidow, now a Unitarian national board member, and one the association's members fighting its radical humanist faction, demanded an end to the Unitarian-AYC relationship.³ After confirming many of the leaders of the AYC were also officials of the Young Communist League e other Unitarian board members joined Davidow in demanding an end to the AYC relationship ---and an end to any type of communist influence over Unitarian youth.

Their demands could not be ignored. In 1941, Fritchman responded, but so adeptly he was able to retain his position as youth leader and continue his other left-wing activities. He created the American Unitarian Youth (AUY), a new group he claimed would be democratically run by its members and free of any ideological dictates. But then he hired young Martha Fletcher as the director of the group. Martha had a record of being on the left and was later a quite active member of Boston's Communist Party apparatus. Despite her record there were no protests of her appointment. Perhaps it was the onset of World War II that led Davidow and others to accept Martha, or to at least defer complaints about her and Fritchman.⁴

1941 Barsky Reorganizes

In 1941, as Fritchman was pacifying Davidow, Edward Barsky was responding to new threats to his latest version of a charitable organization, the United American Spanish Aid Committee, soon renamed the Joint Antifascist Refugee Committee (JAFRC). Attempting to regroup and to regain his organization's license after the United States government declared his organizations too political, Barsky replaced United's Party regulars like Fred Biedenkapp the professional Communist with a new team, one hopefully more acceptable to liberals and to the government. Helen Reid Bryan became the administrator of the United then the JAFRC. .

Bryan was the daughter of a Presbyterian minister and a 1917 graduate of the elite Seven Sister Wellesley College. Her respectable credentials included a long relationship with Quaker peace initiatives based at the Friend's Swarthmore College. Bryan's ideological commitments moved left after that. She became an employee and then leader of several radical organizations. She directed the New York City branch of the American League for Peace and Democracy until the organization was disbanded in 1940 after sustained criticism of its Communist-Soviet

leanings.⁵ In 1941, Helen continued to help the Red cause by beginning to advise the rich Frederick Vanderbilt Field as he donated funds to the Party and its front groups.

As his middle name suggests, Frederick Field's⁶ family was part of the American economic super-elite. Frederick was a Harvard graduate, a classmate of Stephen Duggan's son, Laurence (Noel Field's "best friend"), and an expert in Far Eastern Affairs. He was so highly regarded in liberal circles that he was almost given the position at CBS radio that eventually went to Edward R. Murrow, also a friend of the Duggans and the Fields. Murrow went on to become one of the most influential broadcasters in America, if not the world. However, by the time the CBS job became available Frederick had drifted far left of Murrow's liberalism. He never admitted to joining the Party, but he acknowledged being at least an unofficial member and there are indications he had ties to Soviet intelligence.

Unfortunately, Barsky's appointing Bryan did little to solve the United's problems. Helen struggled to regain its certification by the State Department so Barsky could raise funds for relief in non-neutral countries. She won only a partial victory. Just a provisional license was granted in May 1941. That meant the United had to work very carefully. She then failed to gain the approval of the National Information Bureau, a type of Better-Business-Bureau for philanthropies.⁷ That made it difficult to raise funds from donors outside Barsky's hardcore supporters. Helen continued to solicit donations, claiming the United was for all Spanish refugees, but she and Barsky remained frustrated, especially in finding ways to help those the United favored, purely Red refugees.

Barsky used his monies to establish a committee in politically friendly Mexico and funneled money through it to support the increasing number of refugee Communist leaders and Brigade members who had been settled there.⁸ But he was unable to operate directly in France

or its territories where there were many more stranded Comrades. Bryan had to send money through communist friendly Mexico to Gilberto Bosques, its leftist counsel in Marseilles, France. Bosques then passed it to the chosen refugees in the French camps. He also used it to aid some of the thousands of internees granted the Mexican visas needed to exit the French camps before leaving Europe. Especially worrisome for Barsky and Bryan, Bosques' position was insecure because France's government was suspicious of his actions and there seemed no Barsky-friendly replacement for him. Disappointing, the Dominican government's representative, who had issued thousands of visas to other refugees, never became a viable alternative for Bryan and Barsky.⁹

Bryan desperately needed stable and politically respectable channels for more than obtaining visas. She sought organizations with the legal right to route aid directly to her chosen refugees in France and North Africa. There were few options given France's new stringent policies against Communist-affiliated relief organizations. The Paris Coordinating Committee, the one the North American Committee had established, was moribund and the United could not place anyone in Paris or even in "unoccupied" southern Vichy France after the German invasion. Unoccupied is a poor term because Germany had agents throughout Vichy and made it clear that any irritation, such as the presence of Reds, would trigger an area take-over.

By mid-1941 Bryan's search for alternatives seemed a failure. A crushing disappointment had come in April. Both the Red Cross and the Quaker's American Friends Service Committee refused to accept any funds because of the United's reputation of being what was politely called "political." The Quakers eventually accepted some monies earmarked for selected refugees in North Africa while seeking another agency to assume that work as the Quakers wanted to be

free of the threats to their reputation as a truly neutral aid organization that would result from knowledge of a significant Barsky connection.¹⁰

Although disappointed, Bryan and Barsky continued their 1941 search for a “cover” organization. They knew the two groups the United already had links to, the Exiled Writer’s Committee and the American Committee to Save Refugees, had little chance of being allowed to have representatives working in France. Both had well-deserved reputations as “fronts” and the Vichy government could not allow such organizations to operate in any of the territories it controlled. Bryan and Barsky examined the list of some five hundred American private agencies working in foreign relief in non-neutral countries. The Lovestone-Dubinsky International Relief Association (IRA), Bryan knew, would have nothing to do with a Communist influenced operation. That was made very clear when the IRA’s supporters, including James Isaac Loeb and Reinhold Niebuhr, founded the Union for Democratic Action (later known as the Americans for Democratic Action, ADA).¹¹

Only two agencies seemed possibilities. They both appeared willing to ignore the condemnations of the Barsky-related groups by Dies’ congressional committee and by liberals and socialists such as Sidney Hook and Roger Baldwin. They also seemed acceptable to the French government. Unfortunately, those two groups, the hastily formed Emergency Rescue Committee (ERC) and Robert Dexter’s new Unitarian Service Committee (USC), had not shown interest in the Spanish refugees or in the members of the International Brigades.

After a few overtures, Bryan determined that Dexter’s Unitarian effort was the best alternative, although she held some hope for cooperation with the Emergency Rescue Committee.¹² She could not have predicted a relationship with the Unitarians and conflicts with

the ERC would create ties to the Office of Strategic Services (the new American intelligence agency), to Noel Field, and to the Unitarian's crises of 1946.

The Emergency Rescue Committee's Liberals and the Romantic Varian Fry

The Emergency Rescue Committee began its formal life in July 1940 through the hurried efforts of an unusual mixture of exiled European socialist labor leaders in New York City, noted local liberals such as Reinhold Niebuhr, David F. Seiferheld (a future important figure in the Office of Strategic Services), and the city's leading intellectuals.¹³ They came together when they feared Germany was about to enforce the "surrender on demand" clause in its armistice treaty with France. The Vichy government could be compelled to send hundreds of refugee intellectuals, artists, and labor leaders to Germany's concentration camps. Many, if not most, at greatest risk were Jewish.

In July 1940, the exiled German socialist Karl B. Frank presented a prioritized list to the Rescue Committee. It contained the names of endangered labor and socialist leaders. Then, the American members expanded the list to include stranded European artists and intellectuals. They had consulted experts at Columbia University, the Museum of Modern Art, and even the left-leaning New School for Social Research for names of the most valuable and threatened refugee intelligentsia stranded in unoccupied France. They assumed the care of Spanish Brigade refugees was being handled by others.¹⁴

A quick funding campaign led to minimal donations from the Rockefeller interests and cultural leaders such as Nicholas Murray Butler, the president of Columbia University. Then, shaky foundations for an operational organization were laid by Dr. Frank Kingdon, the leftish minister, college president, Democratic political commentator, and columnist. He decided to

recruit someone to immediately go to France with a list of the endangered and with some two hundred Eleanor Roosevelt arranged waivers of the United States' immigration quota.

There were no experienced workers available so Varian Fry, a thirty-three-year-old brilliant and idealistic anti-Nazi was recruited.¹⁵ The son of a wealthy Wall Street investment manager, Fry attended the best private schools, mastered several languages, and enrolled in Harvard University, graduating in 1931. That came a bit late in life because he had been too rambunctious in prep school and Harvard, but he immediately became a part of New York City's intelligentsia when he married an editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*. He began a long career as a journalist, travelling widely in Europe. His forte was foreign relations, publishing books and articles, including some widely read studies for the intellectual's Foreign Policy Association. After his 1935 trip to Germany, his *New York Times* articles on the brutal treatment of Jews brought him fame. He then became involved in several relief efforts, such as those run by Roger Baldwin, and he worked in the North American Committee's offices where he and Francis Henson had bitter experiences with its Communists.

Within a month after the ERC's creation Fry was in Marseille, the main exit port from Vichy. His mandate was to help the two hundred or so prominent refugees on the committee's list with diplomatic and travel documents, ship tickets, and the permissions required to enter the United States or a South American country. At the same time, in the United States Frank Kingdon worked to find appropriate jobs for the refugees. He and Stephen Duggan, another ERC member, raised funds to subsidize professorships in American colleges and created new centers such as the Institute for Social Research at Columbia University that would host the exiled Frankfurt School's left-wing critical philosophers.

Fry had minimal funds and was expected to quietly finish his emigration work in a few weeks then return to the New York before winter. The ERC's committee members had such stature, and apparently non-political goals, that neither the United States Department of State nor the French government initially had any had worries about Fry. The State Department trusted the committee so much it promised special visas for at least a hundred more refugees and indicated that others would be put on a fast-track for entry into the United States. In addition, the ERC had eased Fry's acceptance in France by arranging to have Donald Lowrie, the universally respected representative of the International Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in France, let it be known he was going to aid Fry. Fry also gained advice and contacts from Waitsill Sharp, the Unitarian's recently arrived relief worker in Lisbon.

However, it was not long before Lowrie, the Vichy government, the State Department, and even Frank Kingdon of the ERC were alienated by Fry and his Centre American Secours' actions. As well, it soon became certain to Helen Bryan that the ERC would never be a good friend of her United or any Communists. Bryan and Barsky knew Fry had voiced anti-Communist beliefs when he was in the United States, but his initial actions in France, such as ignoring Communists seeking help, indicated the ERC shared his ideological bent. Bryan was sure the ERC would never aid members of the cadre the Party so desperately wanted to bring to safety in the Americas. .

Meanwhile, Varian Fry was creating problems for the ERC and all the relief agencies in Vichy. Varian was a compassionate, idealistic and, unfortunately, a somewhat foolhardy young man. It was difficult for him to turn away those whose lives seemed in danger. As a result, Fry immediately went far beyond Kingdon's instructions and put the ERC, and Donald Lowrie, at risk. Varian thought that was justified by his accomplishments. By the time he was forced to

leave, thirteen months after he arrived in France, he and his few assistants had aided as many as 2,000 notable European refugees (not two hundred) and perhaps 2,000 others, to escape. Many were Jews who might have gone to their deaths in concentration camps. Sixty years later he was recognized as an official hero by Israel.

A Too Compassionate Young Man, Except for Reds

Fry had provided aid to famous intellectuals and artists, the labor leaders the New York ERC office had on its priority list, and many, many more. His refugee intellectuals and artists included such famous men and women as Marc Chagall, Hannah Arendt, and Max Ernst. Fry also helped a few politicians, including some anti-Stalin Communists, such as Ruth Fischer. In addition, were the British flyers and Czech soldiers he smuggled to safety across the Spanish and Swiss borders. Varian's helping those men was especially troublesome to the American officials and to the French authorities. Although Vichy remained formally neutral, Germany viewed the British and to some degree Czech soldiers as their prisoners of war and had warned the Vichy government to prevent their escape. Sensitive to such threats Hugh Fullerton, the lead American diplomat in charge of maintaining Vichy relations, took the dangers of helping "the enemy" very seriously.

Despite Vichy's fears of German intervention, the ERC's originally limited goals, and meager funding, Fry continued to save those who might be subject to "surrender on demand." He was willing to do whatever it took to rescue them. Varian had some added financial help from the eccentric American heiress Mary Jane Gold and British intelligence agencies. To accomplish his goals, he engaged in many illegal activities, mixing with some rather shady characters, including Mafia leaders. He set-up an illegal intelligence network to funnel information to and from the French Resistance and British intelligence. He bought forged

passports and convinced Hiram Bingham, a young American counselor officer, to issue visas far beyond the numbers he was allocated.

Regrettably, Fry was neither a trained agent nor an experienced relief worker such as Donald Lowrie . Lowrie was able to do some illegal work such as helping stranded Czech soldiers, without too much notice and became the target of only mild protests. As well, the Unitarians representatives in France were later able to conduct their Office of Strategic Services work and continue Fry's intelligence network without notice. In contrast, Varian came under investigation by the Vichy authorities just days after his arrival in August 1940. A month later, Vichy formally protested his actions to Hugh Fullerton. Fullerton passed the complaints to the State Department, Kingdon in New York City, and to Fry himself. The innocent public revelations of Varian's illegal methods by some of those he helped escape compounded Kingdon's and the State Department's problems. Fullerton soon asked for Fry's expulsion. Frank Kingdon scrambled to find a replacement.¹⁶ Somehow, Fry was able to continue his work in France for another year although he and his staff were arrested, saved only by Hiram Bingham's intervention, then arrested and released again.

Meanwhile, Vichy and the State Department had been able to quickly rid themselves of Frank Bohn, a hardened old International Workers of the World union organizer. The Dubinsky-Strunsky labor-aligned International Relief Association (IRA) and Italian, Jewish,. German groups in America had also decided that an emergency anti "surrender on demand" effort was required to rescue their favored labor and socialist leaders. Arriving in Marseille a few days before Varian Fry, in August 1940, Bohn lasted only a month. His tendency to make his work public knowledge and to do so in popular cafés was too much for Fullerton, the French

authorities, and the IRA.. Its administrators in New York City quickly found a more adept representative, Karel Sternberg, worked until his seizure by the Gestapo in 1942.¹⁷

Fry and Bohn's actions had endangered all the relief agencies in France, as well as the United States' delicate and vital diplomatic relations with the Vichy government. Of great importance to America's authorities Vichy controlled North Africa, a planned base for future American military operations. Fry had created so many problems that Donald Lowrie's Nimes Committee that coordinated some thirty foreign relief agencies working in France decided to shun him. To protect itself it did not allow him into the organization.¹⁸

Fry's increasingly obvious illegal work soon led Hugh Fullerton to reprimand his subordinate Hiram Bingham for helping Fry. Fullerton arranged Bingham's transfer out of France although that was great career risk for Fullerton. Bingham was from a rich and politically powerful Connecticut family. Alfred, his father, had become quite radical and used his wealth to establish the near Marxist *Common Sense* magazine that gained a large following among America's liberals. The Bingham family's radical but influential connections continued through the next generations. Stephen Mitchell Bingham represented the Black Panther George Jackson (Angela Davis's boyfriend) and later, after years of self-exile, established a home among the other liberals of Marin County, California.¹⁹

Fry's illegal actions and fears the Bingham family might cause problems for Fullerton and the State Department worried the ERC. But more was irritating its leaders in New York. Fry was not a skilled organizer, he tended to promise more than he could deliver, and he did little to remedy the ERC's serious bureaucratic shortcomings.²⁰ Varian did not create a viable after-rescue organization for his escapees and the ERC never seemed to have the funds needed for the support Fry promised to his refugees. Hundreds, for example, were left stranded in Lisbon

without documents, tickets for their passage to America, food and housing , or trained relief professionals to help them. The Unitarian’s representatives had to care for them. Worse, many of those Fry sent to Portugal lived under the threat of arrest. Even when Fry found Martinique a safer transfer point than Lisbon, his “clients” were often left without vital resources while they searched for ways secure berths on the increasingly scarce ships to the Americas. Those shortcomings were one of the reasons why the relief organization that seemed to fit with Bryan and Barsky’s needs became tangled in Fry’s problems.

Enter the Unitarians

By 1941, Robert Dexter’s new and inexperienced Unitarian Service Committee found itself entwined with Fry, with Barsky’s Communistic United (soon to be the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee), with the Office of Strategic Services, and with Noel Field. None of that was expected nor was the depth of the Unitarian’s involvement in foreign relief foreseen in 1938 when Robert Dexter persuaded the American Unitarians to explore how they might help their denominational fellows in Europe after Germany’ take-over of Austria in March 1938, then its invasion of Czechoslovakia in October. ²¹

Robert Cloutman Dexter and his wife, Elisabeth Anthony, were as modern and liberal as Walter and Marion Cannon and had even deeper roots in the history of liberal America.²² Robert, the son of a sea captain, was raised in Boston but did not attend Harvard. He graduated from Brown University, another of the high-quality Ivy League schools that had decided not to emulate the new research-focused institutions such as Johns Hopkins and Harvard. Elisabeth came from a family of ministers, reformers (including Susan B. Anthony) and some very rich industrialists whose wealth, like the Baldwin’s , was based on mechanization of the shoe industry. Elisabeth graduated from Maine’s Bates College in 1908, a quality undergraduate-

oriented institution. She went on to study social problems at Columbia University and to work in social welfare. After college, Robert also spent several years as a social worker. He married Elisabeth in 1914 and both converted to Unitarianism. Robert thought of entering the ministry but decided to continue in social work. After World War I ended, he became a full-time charity worker, eventually managing a large Canadian aid organization.

Although successful, and despite being in their thirties and raising children, Robert and Elisabeth returned to college. He finished a master's thesis in Canada, and then the couple found the money they needed and enrolled in Worcester, Massachusetts' Clark University. It was an unusual institution, one begun as a school exclusively for graduate studies. Their choices of the school, fields of study, and research subjects reflected their commitments to secularism, progressive reform, and feminism. Robert majored in that newly-named field, "sociology" Elisabeth pursued a degree in the new "social history", a politically conscious subfield led by scholars such as Arthur Schlesinger Sr. of Harvard University.

On obtaining their degrees, when they both were thirty-six years old, they began careers as academics. They taught at up-state New York's Skidmore College becoming respected teachers and scholars. Robert wrote a well-received textbook on "social adjustment." It was a wide-ranging survey of the causes of poverty and the institutions dealing with it. The book's policy recommendations indicated Robert was not a radical, but a liberal. Elisabeth honed her dissertation into what became feminist classics. She reworked her original 1924, "Colonial Women of Affairs," into several publishable versions in the 1920s and 1930s while she was contributing to Harry Elmer Barnes', *The Making of a Nation*, one of the most esteemed American history textbooks of the era. In addition, Robert continued his research on the social

problems of French Canadians in America and he and Elisabeth explored issues underlying Eugenics and sterilization policies.²³

In 1927, Robert decided to again shift careers. Elisabeth followed him back to Boston as he became the Unitarian's director of social and international relations. Robert's credentials as a "scientific" sociologist fit with the Unitarian's desire to have objectively determined policies on the era's major issues. Robert's assignments included shaping the Unitarian's stand on pressing national social problems such as the conditions of work in the textile factories in America's South. Elisabeth focused on her children, but taught part-time at Radcliffe, Harvard's women's college, while helping Robert research and compose works helpful to Unitarian pastors on problems such as sex and family relations.

The Dexters soon became integrated into Boston's and Cambridge's liberal community. They came to know Walter and Marion Cannon and many others in the region's intellectual set. Much of Robert and Elisabeth's time, however, was spent traveling to establish relations between America and European Unitarians.²⁴ Of special importance, they soon became close to Czechoslovakia's religious and political leaders. The Masaryk family that produced Czechoslovakian premiers and foreign ministers became friends. Norbert Capek, who headed Prague's large Unitarian congregation, also viewed Robert and the American Unitarians as colleagues to be depended upon. Robert's professional connections were not confined to the Czech Republic or to Unitarians, however. He made contacts with the leaders of the aid departments of most denominations in America and Europe. Quakers, Congregationalists, Catholics, and Jews were on his contact list, and he was on their lists of trusted people.²⁵

First Contacts, the Sudetenland

Dexter frequently went to Europe. The trips in the mid-1930s increased his concerns about fascism and German expansion. Hitler's foray into Austria was troubling but it was the fear of Czechoslovakia's take-over in 1938 that led Dexter to plan a survey of relief needs in Europe. When the German occupation began Dexter left the United States with thousands of dollars raised by the Unitarians and more supplied through the efforts of the now famous liberal Nicholas Murray Butler, the long-time president of Columbia University, and New York City's intellectual leader. Dexter's goal was to lay plans to help the hundreds of thousands who might be displaced from the Sudetenland and those that might suffer after a full take-over of Czechoslovakia by Hitler's forces. Of significance, those most likely to be displaced were not native Czechs. Many were political, intellectual, and religious refugees who had fled Germany and Austria. A considerable proportion was Jewish, and a large segment was Socialist or Communist. Of course, the Unitarians in Czechoslovakia were the focus of Dexter's interest even though Prague, where the Unitarian center was located, remained unoccupied when he visited in 1938.²⁶

Dexter and the Quaker relief experts who accompanied him could not remain long in Prague but they stopped in London on their way back to America as the British were also planning to create a non-governmental refugee organization for the Czech problem and were seeking intelligence about German intentions. Although no confirming documents have been found, Dexter's son's memoirs indicate it was then that Dexter made a lasting connection to Britain's intelligence service. That relationship, according to Lewis Dexter, almost caused his father's dismissal by the Unitarians because, when they learned of it a year or so later, they believed Dexter had undermined the Unitarian's commitment to be non-political.²⁷

The Sharps, Innocents Abroad

However, in late 1938 Dexter's British connection was unknown and the Unitarian hierarchy in Boston agreed to his proposal to send a representative to Prague to aid refugees. The Unitarians had little money and no experienced social-work staff, but Dexter was ordered to immediately find someone. His rather frantic search for volunteers resulted in the recruitment of Waitsill Sharp, a young Harvard-trained lawyer turned New England Unitarian minister. Martha, his social-work-trained and ex-Hull House volunteer wife joined him for what they believed would be a brief stay in Czechoslovakia to help the refugees with emigration difficulties..²⁸ The Sharps left their children in America, and arrived in Prague in February 1939, about the same time that Hermann Field, Noel's brother, was there working with the new British government approved relief effort, one that had ties to England's Communists. The Sharps stayed longer than then Dexter expected, but for less than half a year. Although they were citizens of a neutral country, and the Unitarians were regarded as non-political, when the German forces reached Prague the Sharps were forced to leave. Hermann Field also had to go and headed to Poland and more emigration work for Britain's Czech Refugee Trust. The Sharps went directly to America although Dexter had wished they would stop in Paris to see what help they could provide to Czech refugees and soldiers who fled to France. Any additional Unitarian foreign relief work had to wait until the Dexter's completed a new three-month trip for another survey of European needs.

Innocents Abroad Again, Even Charles Joy

After their survey, the Dexters returned to Boston to convince the Unitarians to finally establish a permanent relief organization--with Robert as its executive director. However, it was not until May 1940 that the Unitarian Service Committee (USC) was established and began recruiting a staff. Dexter's highest priority was to immediately place someone in Europe. He again turned

to the Sharps who reluctantly accepted his call. Dexter gave them a long list of important relief workers and diplomats to contact, with an emphasis on Donald Lowrie of the YMCA.

Dexter's instruction list was quite short and, unfortunately, non-specific. He told the Sharps to concentrate on emigration problems, with hints to focus on Czechs and intellectuals, but to do whatever seemed appropriate. It was difficult for Dexter to be more exact or, later, to supervise the Sharps. Communications across the Atlantic were slow and expensive, and the European situation was extremely fluid. That meant the Sharps were on-their-own.²⁹

The Sharps made some unexpected and complicating decisions soon after they arrived. Their definition of "appropriate" did much to reshape the Unitarian's aid policies and to link the USC to illegal activities. The Sharps went far beyond just helping legal intellectual emigrants and marooned Czechs gain emigration papers. In July 1940, before they reached France the Sharps established a base in neutral Portugal. They found rooms in Lisbon and then set-out for Marseille, the great French port where so many refugees congregated. They discovered they were not alone there.³⁰ They contacted the representatives of many other relief agencies. Of special importance were the Americans Donald and Helen Lowrie. The Lowries were experienced relief workers, their efforts dating to the Russian Revolution. They had become central figures in refugee relief efforts in Vichy France and in dealing with the Vichy and American governments over the Nazi-required deportation of Jews. The Lowries would save thousands of lives, including those of several hundred Jewish children who had been left in France after their parents were deported.³¹ Then, the Sharps encountered and formed a relationship with Varian Fry, that other newcomer to France.

As the Sharps began their work in Marseille Robert Dexter was formalizing the Unitarian Service Committee's operations in Boston. Important for him was to have an experienced, full-

time, and permanent representative in Europe who, among other responsibilities, would oversee the Sharps. Dexter chose Charles Rhind Joy, a Unitarian minister and administrator, to be his official voice in Europe. Joy arrived in Lisbon on the famous Clipper seaplane in September 1940, two months after the Sharps had arrived. As with the Sharps, Joy's personality would lead the Unitarians into unexpected complications and conflicts.

Charles Joy was fifty-five, nearly two decades older than Waitsill Sharp and two years older than Robert Dexter.³² Charles grew up in Roxbury, Massachusetts, then a suburb of Boston. Although not from an elite family, he graduated from Harvard University and then its Divinity School in 1911. His career as a Unitarian minister began well, but his church dismissed him when he his pacifism led him to protest America's entry into World War I. He spent the war working for the YMCA and the Lowries in Europe and reestablished his reputation as an administrator. He returned to America, the ministry, and a series of important positions in the Unitarian's headquarters in Boston. He was a candidate for the presidency of the Unitarian Association in 1937 when were some serious conflicts. Some of them had to do with personal matters, others had to do with the supposed excesses of the association's humanist factions, and with an extreme secular interpretation of the nature of Unitarianism on the part of Frederick May Eliot, one of Joy's contenders.

The humanists in the association were politically and theologically radical. 1933's Humanist Manifesto called for the abandonment of the denomination's remaining ties to Christianity, declaring there was no supernatural, and demanded the end of acquisitive and profit-motivated societies. Eliot had an important advantage over Joy that compensated for accusations that he approved the humanist declarations. He was part of the great Eliot family that included T. S.

Eliot, many famous Unitarian ministers and reformers, and founders of influential institutions such as Washington University in St. Louis and Reed College in Portland, Oregon.

Eliot overcame his conservative critics and with his victory Charles Joy thought it best to leave his administrative post and return to the ministry. He felt that would give him the free time he needed to pursue his love of writing.

Once in office, Eliot began a reorganization and reorientation of the association. His policies made Unitarianism more visible, partly through an increased emphasis on publications and social action. Revitalizing the association's *Christian Register* publication was just one of his many priorities as he sought to make Unitarianism relevant to an era of economic conflict and threatening ideological movements. Eliot's policies did not go uncontested and the worries about him being too secular continued.³³

Despite the earlier frictions between Joy and Eliot, Robert Dexter thought the administratively experienced and multi-lingual Joy was the man to head the permanent Lisbon office of the Unitarian Service Committee. Charles accepted Dexter's offer and set-off for Europe-- but without his wife. Like the Sharps, he had been given only general guidelines for his mission.

Mission Creep: The Sharps and Fry Go beyond Dexter's Plans

When Joy arrived in Lisbon in September 1940 much, but not all, of the Unitarian Service Committee's future had been set by the Sharps' decisions. Waitsill and Martha Sharp had gone far beyond Dexter's expectations. He thought they would confine themselves to helping legal émigrés exit France and to providing minimal aid to stranded Czechs. But as one of the Sharp's first actions the kindhearted Martha led a project to buy and rush food to a rural area in France that was under German occupation. Martha felt she had to step-in because the Red Cross was not

allowed to provide aid in German occupied areas such as the Pu region. Working closely with the Lowries of the YMCA, she also began providing clothes to refugees. When Robert Dexter learned of this he became quite concerned. He never thought his committee could be large and wealthy enough to supply such mass aid, and he wanted the Unitarian's to remain non-political. The emergency food operation used scarce funds and he feared it would cause diplomatic repercussions because it violated Britain's blockade rules as well as France's laws. Moreover, he and many others in the relief field thought that such work would prove futile given the Nazi's power. Robert also had an understanding with the Red Cross that it, not the Unitarian organization, was to be the provider of aid such as food and clothes.³⁴

Not yet aware of Robert's misgivings, the Sharps drifted further from facilitating emigration. They joined with the Lowries to aid many Czech families on what seemed to be a permanent basis. They also made a clearly dangerous commitment. They concluded an agreement with Varian Fry just before he left for the United States to face FBI investigations because the government mistakenly thought he had favored Communists. The Sharps promised Fry the Unitarians would handle all the refugees he was sending to Portugal, even the "illegal" ones. Both Dexter and Charles Joy fretted over that because of its potential for alienating the French and Portuguese governments. They had another worry. Because Fry's Emergency Rescue Committee seemed unable to raise the monies needed for the support of its former "clients" the USC might have to support them although its funding was nearly exhausted.³⁵

The Sharps did more that worried Boston's administrators. During the few months they were in France they began working inside its huge refugee camps. That also upset Dexter because he continued to believe emigration had to be the focus of the Service Committee's work. More disturbing was the Sharps direct involvement with Varian Fry's illegal activities. The

Sharps helped him, for example, with the escape of Lion Feuchtwanger, the famous literary figure. When Lion reached America and unthinkingly published details of his escape, it was hard for the French and the Germans not to realize that at least Fry was involved in an illegal act.³⁶

How much Charles Joy knew of such illegal work at that time is unclear, but Robert Dexter had begun to sense there were serious problems in France, if not Lisbon. He took action.³⁷ He pushed the Sharps to leave France. . . Whatever the reason, Waitsill Sharp left for America in October. Martha remained behind until December. All her time and energy after Waitsill's departure were consumed by a project to bring a large group of refugee children, mostly Jewish, to America on behalf of another American relief group—something noble but worrisome to Dexter.

Joy vs. Dexter, Enter Noel Field

Although Robert Dexter was advocating against having any USC representatives in France, Charles Joy demanded a helper posted in Marseille to replace the Sharps. He wanted someone to deal with emigration details and conduct what Joy declared was now unavoidable, work within the refugee camps. Dexter and the Service's board, believing that Joy was a trustworthy and conservative manager, finally agreed --although they remained hesitant about the camp work. They also thought a reliable person had already been selected to replace Martha Sharp. They believed Martha had arranged for Helen Lowrie³⁸ to replace her. Helen was an experienced relief worker who knew all the influential people in Europe and knew how to do "illegal" work if it was inescapable. The Lowries were conducting an underground refugee line from France to Switzerland and later became important resources for the OSS in Geneva with a registration number of 489. The Lowries were able to operate so inconspicuously Dexter thought the French and American authorities might ignore any of their deviations from purely legal relief work.

To Boston's surprise, Charles Joy refused to accept Helen's appointment. Joy became angry when he learned that Robert Dexter was planning to appoint other workers without consulting him.

Acting quickly, Joy wired Boston he had found a better candidate than Helen and insisted that his selection be immediately accepted. He emphasized the Service Committee had promised him the right to appoint all his staff. He hinted he would not stand for Dexter interfering with him in the future.³⁹ Joy then informed Boston he had chosen Noel Field, a man recommended by Helen's husband Donald Lowrie. Dexter was upset, but all he could do was run an after-the-fact quick check on Noel through the State Department where Noel had worked since the 1920s. Dexter received a standard perfunctory positive response, although by the end of 1940 three informants had already told government authorities that Noel was a Communist with links to Soviet intelligence. Without knowledge of those accusations, Dexter approved Noel Field's appointment as the Unitarian's representative in France. Robert Dexter soon came to regret that. He would consider as the major cause of the Unitarians' 1946 ordeals.

The Fields: Idealism, Communism, and a Great Deal for the Unitarians

Noel Haviland Field and his siblings spent most of their youth in Switzerland as their American-born, wealthy, Harvard University educated Quaker father, Herbert Haviland Field, tried to make a success of his innovative information system for zoological publications.⁴⁰ Herbert worked closely with the information system builder Paul Otlet and shared his dreams of creating a universal system for all knowledge. In Zurich, Noel, his brother Hermann, and his sisters Elsie and Lettie were raised in luxury and in an intellectually intense setting. They absorbed the internationalism and social idealism of their parents and their friends such as Otlet

and Henri La Fontaine, the Nobel winning peace activist. Herbert and Nina, his British wife, were not radicals, however. Herbert warned his children against Bolshevism after his first-hand World War I experience with the revolutionaries in Germany while he worked for Allen Dulles, the American intelligence chief in Switzerland.⁴¹

After Herbert's sudden and early death in 1921, Nina decided to move to America and to Cambridge Massachusetts where Herbert had attended college and where some of his closest friends were on Harvard University's faculty. Although not rich, the Fields lived comfortable lives and all the children went to the best schools. Being very smart and having had a Swiss high-school education, Noel whizzed through Harvard's undergraduate program in two years. His honors thesis was on arbitration for world peace, something his father and his friends such as Henri La Fontaine had great faith in. While in Cambridge, Noel began to show his political leanings. He associated with radicals and he and his brother and sisters became friends of the Clark, the Sarton, the Cannon, the Tatlock, and the Hinton families. Susan Clark was a reformer-journalist and by the 1930s she and her children were involved with Boston's Communists. Carmelita Hinton's children became active Party members when in Washington, D.C. and, through Jean Tatlock, became linked to Robert Oppenheimer of America; atomic bomb program, and many Party members in San Francisco, California. After World War II, part of the Hinton family moved to Communist China to serve Mao's cause.

Upon his Harvard graduation in 1924, Noel expected to take a position with the State Department. Although his father had friends in the agency, Noel was rejected as being too young and he had a stutter his relatives thought was due to both heredity and bullying when he was in the Swiss schools. Noel was bitter about being rejected by the State Department. After a trip to Europe to visit his childhood sweetheart's family, and perhaps do a short tour with a relief

agency in the Soviet Union, he returned to Cambridge and took Ida Cannon's course in medical social work. He became a prison counselor, but only for a year or two. He participated in political protests and by the mid-1920s he probably had links to the Communist above-ground activities. In 1926, the State Department accepted him, he married Herta Vieser his German-Swiss sweetheart, and moved to Washington, D.C. where the couple met important young diplomats such as Laurence Duggan, George Kennan and, later, Alger Hiss. Noel did well at the department as an analyst and speech writer on such topics as the League of Nations and disarmament, and he served on delegations to international naval conferences. However, he was frustrated because he was refused a posting in a foreign country as a diplomat despite overcoming his stuttering and shyness. Noel's ideological commitments deepened and by the mid-1930s he was leading what he termed an "illegal life" alongside his mundane desk job. It is known he authored anonymous articles for Communist publications, and he probably became a secret associate member of the Party. Unfortunately for historians, Noel gave different dates for his American Party membership, varying from the mid-1920s to 1936.

Whatever his initial year of membership, 1934 was a momentous year for Noel. He, and soon his entire family, began a new and long-term relationship with Hede and Paul Massing, Soviet intelligence agents in Europe and the United States as Noel began moving from being a moderate to supporting Stalin's policies. Reports vary but some claim he passed vital government documents to the Massings. Noel's brother, sister and mother helped in that and in smuggling information into and out of Nazi Germany. Then, in 1936 Noel took an important and well-paying position in Geneva Switzerland with the League of Nations. Noel began a lifestyle he had been used to when he was a child in Switzerland. . He and Herta lived in a Geneva

apartment, had a lovely villa, had two cars and a maid, and time to travel throughout Europe with his mother.

Noel excelled at the League and mixed with the members of the international community, including aid workers such as the Lowries. Noel also intensified his Communist involvements. He and Herta joined the Swiss Party, paying their dues to Sali Lieberman, and it is certain that during 1938 on a trip to Moscow the Soviet hierarchy awarded him a special Party membership. Noel's sister-in-law, mother, and brother also became involved with the Cause during the 1930s. Noel had become so dedicated he stood by the Party after Hede and Paul Massing barely escaped being purged "with prejudice" in 1938, and after General Walter Krivitsky and Ignatz Reiss, Noel's two newest Soviet intelligence controllers, met their deaths after they defected fearing Stalin's Great Terror. Some claims have Noel helping Soviet intelligence locating and assassinating Reiss.⁴²

It was Noel's deepening commitment to the Communist cause that led him to accept an important new League Assignment in late 1938. He became a leading member of the special team assigned to repatriate foreigners who had fought for Spain's Republicans. Working at the French-Spanish border, Noel contacted International Brigade members and Communist leaders from many European countries, including Laszlo Rajk and the propagandist Otto Katz. One of Noel's tasks was to find nations willing host his refugees. That was made difficult by the Soviet Union not stepping forward to grant visas to their foreign comrades, something that had serious repercussions after World War II.

Completing the Spanish refugee work, at the outbreak of World War II in September 1939, Noel helped with The League's aid program for Finland then realized the League might end or, at best, move to the United States.⁴³ He wanted to stay with the League but was hesitant about

returning to America. He looked for a new job. He almost secured an important one in the Philippines with the State Department and one with the American Ambassador in London. As well, there were some offers of positions with major relief agencies, including the Red Cross and YMCA. But they fell-through. Noel did some translation work for authors and newspapermen in Europe as he looked for better work. Then, he made an unexpected choice. He returned the tickets he booked on an America-bound ship and accepted Charles Joy's offer of work with the Unitarians in France. Noel thought that would allow him to continue his aid to the Spanish refugees and the Brigade's members.⁴⁴

Charles Joy thought he had made a remarkable deal for the USC in hiring Noel in October 1940. At an exceptionally low salary he gained a diplomatically skilled and multi-lingual man with experience in European refugee work.

Noel's Worries

Noel and his wife Herta agreed to a stipend only one-tenth of Noel's League salary plus minimal expenses and the cost of room and board in France. To compensate for the reduction of income, Noel had his mother send him money but he and Herta soon became deeply anxious about their financial situation. They began asking the Unitarians for raises and for extra funds so they could maintain their Swiss residence. They also quickly tired of living in a squalid apartment in Marseille and suffering because of the food shortages in Vichy France⁴⁵ Joy tolerated the complaints because Noel seemed irreplaceable. Important to Joy were the many important international relief -worker contacts Noel made while at the League's headquarters in Geneva. Among many others was Pablo Azcarate, the League's expert on minorities and an official of Spain's Republican government. Noel had made another important contact in Geneva: the

mysterious Johanna Herta (Jo) Tempì who Joy wanted to hire to assist Noel and his wife in Marseilles.⁴⁶

With Noel's help Charles Joy began laying his plans for expanding the Unitarian's work, even though his service had little money, a limited-action mandate, and faced Robert Dexter's hesitations about extended efforts. One of Joy's first ideas was to begin rescuing famous scientists because the other relief agencies were focused on artists and political figures. Then came ideas for establishing schools, medical care, and a greater USC role in distributing food and clothing in the refugee camps.

The Red Millionaire and His Friends

Charles Joy made a significant contact in late 1940, one that led the Unitarian Service Committee into more unexpected and serious involvements with intelligence gathering and accusations of aiding Communists. Joy came under-the-spell of Louis Dolivet, a man whose life remains a tantalizing puzzle. The contact probably came through Noel Field. Noel had worked in the same building as Dolivet when both men were with the League in Geneva and when Louis was the general secretary of the Comintern-approved International Peace Campaign. Originally a Popular Front organization, the campaign was sponsored by England's conservative Viscount Robert Cecil (who also was the president of the League and a Nobel Peace Prize winner) and by Pierre Cot, France's radical socialist.⁴⁷ Also on the campaign's staff, at first in its Paris office and then Geneva, was Johanna Herta (Jo) Tempì, a German leftist who had escaped to England and then went to France with the help of Communist networks. "Jo" had been through at least two marriages, several names, acquired French citizenship, was in a relationship with a hard-core Communist who would become deeply involved with the French underground,. Jo then secretly married a Russian emigre. However, much of Jo Tempì's life

remains unknown. It is certain, however, that she was a life-long Communist although she seems to have been disowned by the Party for a time because of her work with Louis Dolivet and Willi Munzenberg.⁴⁸

Louis Dolivet's biography is also incomplete.⁴⁹ He may have been born in Romania as Ludovic Brecher or in France as Louis Dolivet. In either case, by the 1930s he was in Paris and in the employ of Willi Munzenberg, the "Red Millionaire" propagandist for the Soviet Union as well as the Comintern. That put Dolivet in illustrious Communist company. The famous writer Arthur Koestler worked for Willi and Otto Katz, Willi's associate. Katz established money-making anti-fascist Popular Front organizations in Hollywood in the mid-1930s and was Munzenberg's protégé.

Munzenberg has a more complete biography. He began his active life as a Communist in Germany before the Russian Revolution, even travelling back-and-forth to Zurich to visit Lenin. During the 1920s in Germany Willi founded remarkably successful international fund-raising and propaganda organizations for the Comintern. Some of the profits were used to further his growing publications empire. He is credited as being the inventor of the "front" form of organization that, in the name of great causes such as famine relief, gathered in innocents who did not realize they were helping the Red cause. The world-wide campaign for Sacco-Vanzetti was orchestrated by Munzenberg and he successfully covered-up the causes of the Great Famines in the Soviet Union. He founded many magazines, even movie houses, and traveled to America where he enthralled liberals.

Munzenberg moved many of his operations from Germany to Paris in the early 1930s where he gained additional financial support from Olof Aschberg, a Jewish Swedish financier who had been the Bolsheviks' international banker. Munzenberg and Aschberg gave material

and propaganda aid to the Spanish Republicans perhaps smuggling guns, and Willi continued to be a faithful Stalinist while following the Comintern's Popular Front directives. He put his assistants such as Dolivet, Katz, and Tempi to work on many anti-fascist projects.

Then, by 1937, Willi was in trouble with Stalin. Disenchanted with the purges of the mid-1930s Munzenberg began leading an independent anti-fascist campaign in France while becoming linked with Trotsky's Fourth International. However, because he was a German and a Communist, he was interned by the French government. After the German invasion he was able to escape from his camp and attempted to join the French resistance forces. But soon after his escape he disappeared. When his body was found the evidence pointed to an assassination by Stalin's followers, not Nazis .

Unlike Munzenberg, Louis Dolivet seems to have avoided being tagged as a full-blown Trotskyite by the Stalinists and managed to remain off the French Communist Party's and Comintern's hit-lists. However, although he may never have been a regular member, Louis knew much about Party operations in France and, later, about the various resistance forces that arose after the German invasion. He also had connections to Charles de Gaulle's Free French apparatus.

Charles Joy Makes Strange Friends, Further Endangering the “Non-political” Unitarians

When Charles Joy met and began an association with Dolivet in 1940 Louis had been serving with the French air force, was able to avoid internment, and had all the documentation necessary for emigration to the United States. He was soon on his way to New York City with promises of funding---again from Olof Aschberg who also fled to America after his French internment. Dolivet first stated his goal in America was to create an organization to foster group, not individual, emigration⁵⁰ but he changed direction and established The Free World Association,

an influential public relations operation based in New York City. It had a different goal than Joy anticipated. It emphasized support for French resistance fighters and left-wing politics, not emigration. But that “political” stance did not end Joy’s relationship with Dolivet although it might anger Vichy’ government.

With some believing the Free World Association was a Communist front and others worried that it was working for Vichy’s enemy Charles De Gaulle, unlike Joy Robert Dexter fretted over the damage a Joy-Dolivet link might do to the Unitarians’ reputation.⁵¹ Dolivet’s *Free World* magazine was distributed in many nations including, at risk to many, in Vichy France. Its Munzenberg-like Popular Front rhetoric supported the Soviet Union but called for a unified anti-Nazi resistance and aid to France’s underground fighters. With Hitler’s Russia invasion in 1941, Dolivet’s message became less complicated.. He demanded support for Russia in its fight against fascism. America was urged to join the war effort, giving all possible aid to the French resistance and the Soviet Union to ensure postwar world peace.

Dolivet was persuasive and quickly gained national influence. He served on important panels such as the United States’ War Refugee Board and was hired by the fledgling United Nations as a publicist-lobbyist. Dolivet hob-knobbed with the famous in America, including the actor-director Orson Wells, and he became somewhat of a darling to America’s liberals who had no worries about his communist leanings. He became more of an elite insider when he married into high society. In 1942, he wed Beatrice Straight of the wealthy Willard C Whitney family. The Whitneys financed the very influential left-progressive *New Republic* magazine but there was much more to the family’s leftist connections. Known only to a select few at the time, Michael, Beatrice’s brother, had been recruited as a Soviet agent by the infamous Anthony Blunt when Michael was studying in England. Blunt’s British “Cambridge” spy ring included Guy

Burgess and Kim Philby who became invaluable Soviet spies during World War II and the Cold war.⁵²

Further and Further Away From a Neutral USC

Dolivet had another association that was dangerous for the Unitarian Service Committee's standing as a non-political relief organization. This association was also threatening to the State Department's efforts to maintain its relationship with the Vichy government. The complication began after Charles Joy sent messages to Boston that encouraged the Unitarians to have Howard Brooks, a young Staten Island New York Unitarian minister, contact Dolivet as soon as the Frenchman reached America. Brooks did so. Perhaps without the Unitarians knowing of it, Dolivet recruited Brooks as the executive secretary of the Free World Association. Dolivet also convinced Brooks to engage in an illegal trip that directly endangered the Unitarians.⁵³

Louis asked Howard to go to France and contact de Gaulle's and other resistance forces, using the USC's neutral-relief status as a cover. Dolivet raised funds and, without revealing the purposes of the trip, convinced Robert Dexter to allow Brooks to travel to France as Dexter's temporary assistant on Dexter's forthcoming trip to Europe. Dexter's expectation was to temporarily relieve Charles Joy in Portugal during summer 1941.

Robert reached Lisbon in late April. Brooks followed, and was in France by June. Brooks did much Unitarian work although his focus was on the status of the resistance. He checked on Noel's efforts in the camps and verified that relief and medical supplies were not falling into German hands. He met with Noel, Donald Lowrie, and the State Department's Hugh Fullerton and concluded Noel had been able to rebuild Fullerton's trust in the committee.⁵⁴ Brooks, like Hugh Fullerton at the time, believed the "saintly" Noel was refraining from engaging in any illegal activities. Noel's forging of a close working relationship with the Jewish relief agencies in

Vichy deeply impressed Brooks. Brooks also met with Dr. Rene Zimmer, a refugee Strasburg physician Joy and Noel had recruited to conduct medical work in the camps and who later became an Office of Strategic Services asset. Brooks then talked with Varian Fry who was, Brooks wrote, “dodging the police.”⁵⁵

Brooks’ reports to the committee’s headquarters in Boston were glowing, but they included statements that did not fit with the image of a neutral relief organization. For example, he reported that he was proud that Noel was helping “only resisters.” Brooks then turned to the subject of the resistance forces. In his reports and in his 1942, *Prisoners of Hope: Report on a Mission*,⁵⁶ that were unwisely made public, he revealed in general terms the passive resistance activities of the socialist and Catholic labor unions in Vichy. He did not mention any active resistance or Communist involvements because he knew that Germany would certainly have stepped-in to quash guerilla or Red organizations. But even allusions to the existence of a non-communist resistance were dangerous for the resisters—and for the Vichy government.

Resistance was a serious crime to the Vichy government. For example, Charles de Gaulle, the Free French leader in exile in London who had some ties to the French Communists, had been sentenced to death for treason by Vichy in 1940. And the Germans were not very subtle in their warnings that Vichy either eliminate the de Gaulle Free French and other resistance groups or face severe penalties. In addition to Germany’s the threats to the French, there was a complicating diplomatic factor. The American State Department looked upon de Gaulle as much as an irritating factor as a valuable ally and did want any relief groups associating with him.

Brooks did not make public his contacts with the more active resistance organizations during his months in France.⁵⁷ However, he disclosed those contacts when he met with representatives

of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). Brook's leftist contacts and the OSS relationship began to entangle the Unitarians in even more illegal relief and political activities.⁵⁸

Brooks and the Left, the Dexters and the OSS, Joy Stranded in America

Brooks was not the only Unitarian going beyond the limits of neutral relief. Within a short time after their return from Lisbon in autumn 1941, Robert Dexter and his wife had secretly become active Office of Strategic Services (OSS) assets, possibly after Brooks recommended them to the agency. The evidence of the couple's OSS connection is clear. For example, John Hughes, the agency's controller in New York, booked tickets in January 1942 on a July Clipper seaplane for Robert and Elisabeth's summer trip to Lisbon. The couple was assigned OSS work names: Robert was Corn, Elisabeth was Cornette. They were given a code book for their communications.⁵⁹ W

With the great secrecy surrounding their connection, the Dexters did not think their OSS work would endanger the association--but at least Brooks' connections soon raised problems. How much Robert Dexter knew of Brook's left-oriented undercover work during summer 1941 is unknown but Charles Joy claimed to have been unaware of it. He declared he learned of it only as he was expecting to return from Boston to Lisbon in September 1941.⁶⁰ When Joy heard of Brooks' OSS connection he became incensed. He worried about his and the association's ability to continue its work in France if the French or Germans became aware of it. He wrote a heated, highly confidential memo to the USC's board. In it, Joy reported a conversation he had with a relief worker just returned from France that indicated Brooks had been less than an adept agent. The relief community in France had guessed what he was doing. Joy also described how Brooks had been talking about his French undercover work at Free World fundraising meetings in New York, and how Louis Dolivet was already publishing articles that would let any French or

German intelligence agent (or American diplomats such as Fullerton) know that a Unitarian Service Committee representative had been contacting the resistance leaders.

Joy demanded a self-serving declaration from the Unitarian's board, one stating the only representatives of the committee in France had been Robert Dexter and Noel Field, and the committee never had and never would engage in illegal activities. Charles also wanted a statement of innocence sent to Adolph Berle, the State Department's head of security, so that he would prevent any blocks to Joy obtaining a new passport.⁶¹ Joy had been correct in worrying that the State Department was unwilling to let him return to Europe. Hugh Fullerton, its representative in Marseille, had begun forwarding very unfavorable comments about the USC's actions, partly because of Brooks' contacting the resistance.

The Unitarian's responses pleased Joy, but he was unable to return to Europe. That left the USC in an awkward and complicating situation: Robert Dexter, the head of the committee was in Lisbon and far away from the Boston headquarters while the supposed head of French operations remained in America, and was increasingly frustrated. In addition, the ties between Dolivet and the Unitarians led to what became a permanent commitment by the USC to work with Office of Strategic Services. Soon after the United States declared war on Germany all the major officers of the committee were consciously helping the OSS---and the OSS was helping the committee. The USC funneled information about people and conditions in France and Germany and helped the OSS's attempts to send vast amounts of money to French resisters. In return, the OSS provided the USC with secure communications to and from Europe through its diplomatic pouch; granted priority travel permits to USC personnel; convinced the Treasury Department to allow dubious funds transfers to France; and soon helped the USC obtain munificent funding through government-related agencies such as the National War Fund. The

National War Fund was very important. Beginning in 1943, it was providing the Unitarian's and the Strunsky IRA-ERC groups with more funds annually than they had previously raised in all the years since the war began. A year later, the USC and IRA began receiving more and very substantial financial help from the War Refugee Board (WRB). After several years of lobbying by many groups, including one led by Charles Joy, Varian Fry and Louis Dolivet, the Roosevelt administration recognized how serious the situation was for European Jews and began committing millions of dollars for their rescue and care, sending the funds through the WRB. The OSS may have channeled some of its monies through the WRB. The WRB contributions were significant. The USC received \$7.5mil in 1944 and gave ten percent of that to Noel.⁶²

Jo Tempi

The Dolivet-Brooks connection was not the only contribution Charles Joy made to the Unitarian's postwar upheavals. Soon after Joy contacted Noel Field, Noel introduced Joy to the vibrant young German Jewish woman based in Switzerland who worked for the Swiss Red Cross, Donald Lowrie's YMCA, and the Friends Service Committee in the French refugee camps and, later, German prisons. Joy was deeply impressed by her energy and intelligence and by Noel's recommendation based upon his encounters with her in Geneva.⁶³ Joy did not wait to perform any background checks before he began recommending Jo Tempi to the USC, asking that she be hired as a full-time worker. If he knew of Tempi's connections to Dolivet and other communists he did not report them. Joy believed in left-liberal cooperation and such ties did not bother him. However, perhaps because of a tight USC budget, Tempi was not hired until Noel, on his own, brought her on-board in 1944.⁶⁴

The Barsky-Bryan Factor—Relief for Who?

Charles Joy had continued to push the Unitarian Service Committee to expand its reach and powers. In May 1941, at Joy's behest, the committee's board made a decision that had unexpected ramifications. It formally approved its representatives providing general aid and, without consulting Robert Dexter, for the first time, to deliver outsiders' food and supply packages to specified individuals in France's refugee camps. The USC was to be a go-between, expecting the program would yield extra income that could be used for its own projects. The other organizations would pay for the earmarked deliveries to those on their lists of the particularly favored. Charles Joy was to supervise the initiation of the operation when he returned to Lisbon; Noel Field was to do the distributing within the camps. The first organization to sponsor any of the work, a group of American Evangelical Christians, seemed non-political because the recipients were evangelicals in internment.⁶⁵ However, when Robert Dexter, who was still marooned in Lisbon, heard of the policy of earmarked relief, he protested. He demanded the policy be canceled! He argued that such programs would be too difficult to organize and would divert the committee from its main goal of helping important refugees escape from France and North Africa. To Dexter's surprise and extreme dismay, the board rejected his argument after consulting with Charles Joy.⁶⁶ Handling the Christians' packages did not cause an immediate logistics problem, but the program proved to be the path that entangled the USC with the Communist-dominated Barsky-Bryan Joint Antifascist Refugee Committee serious conflicts.

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¹⁸ Subak, *Op cit.*

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²⁰ USC 19114/3 (37 and 16114/3 (37); Newhard, Nora, "The Unitarian Service Committee: Under the Direction of Dr. Robert C. Dexter, 1938-1944," Honors Thesis, Clark University, 2009, p.

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²² Newhard, *Op cit.* ;Biographical materials on the Dexters are in USC, *passim.*

²³ Dexter, Robert Cloutman, *Social Adjustment* (NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1930); Dexter, Elisabeth Williams Anthony, *Colonial women of affairs : women in business and the professions in America before 1776* (Boston ;New York: Houghton Mifflin,1931).

²⁴ Countway, *Op .cit*, folder 625.

²⁵ Di Figlia. *Op cit.*; USC Dexter files, *passim.*

²⁶ USC, Eliot, and Dexter files, *passim*; Subak, *Op cit.*; BU b33 f17.

²⁷ USC 16114/3 (50) in which Lewis also states that his mother remained an agent for American intelligence after the war; 34750 (13); Genizi, Haim, "Christian Charity: the Unitarian Service Committee's Relief Activities on Behalf of Refugees from Nazism, 1940-5," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 2 2 (1987): 261-275.

²⁸ USC 16114/6 100, 16185/2 (39); Newhard, *Op cit.*; Subak, *Op cit.*

²⁹ USC 16185/2 (39), 5-1940.

³⁰ USC 16185/2 (40); on Lowrie, Helen and Donald Lowrie papers at the U. of Illinois Archive, <http://archives.library.illinois.edu/archon/index.php?p=collections/controlcard&id=1518>

³¹ Donald Lowrie Papers, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Campus.

³² On Joy, <http://uudb.org/articles/charlesrhindjoy.html>.

³³ Eliot, Frederick May, *Unitarians Face a New Age: The Report of the Committee of Appraisal of the American Unitarian Association* (Boston: American Unitarian Association, 1936); Wilson, Edwin H., *The Genesis of a Humanist Manifesto* (Amherst, NY: Humanist Press, 1995; Morris, Carol Ruth, "Frederick May Eliot, President of the American Unitarian Association (1937-1958)", Ph.D. Diss., Boston University Graduate School, 1970.

³⁴ USC 18185/2 (10); 16185/2 (40).

³⁵ Subak, *Op cit.*, 133; USC 1615/(8)

³⁶ *NYT*, 10-6-1940, 10-20-1940.

³⁷ USC 16185/2 (40), 19114/2. On Fry, Joy, Dexter , NARA RG226 160a b3-15.

³⁸ USC 16114/6 (50), Dexter, 'The story of the Fields'.

³⁹ USC 16114/3 50.

⁴⁰ On the early history of the Fields: Burke, Colin B., *Information and Intrigue: From Index Cards to Dewey Decimals to Alger Hiss* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2014).

⁴¹ On the history of the Field family and Noel, to WWII, Burke, "Information," *Op cit, passim*.

⁴² Marton, *True Believer, Op cit.*, p. 67, asserts that Noel was a part, albeit second hand, in the assassination of Reiss.

⁴³ USC, 16114/3 (37) Noel Vitae,

⁴⁴ Sharp, Tony, *Stalin's American Spy: Noel Field, Allen Dulles, and the East European Show Trials* (London: Hurst & Co., 2014).

⁴⁵ USC 16146/2 (3) 4-20-43 , 16114/4 (70) 12-3-44 and various. There are some hints that Joy, as well as Noel, was a 'source' for Soviet intelligence from within the USC. See, Haynes, John Earl and Harvey Klehr, *Venona: Decoding Soviet Espionage in America* (New Haven: Yale U, Press, 1999), 76-77. Joy fits the description of "Dr. Joe" in a document in the Soviet archive and he may have, like Noel, been a source for the OSS and Soviet intelligence simultaneously.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 202

⁴⁷ Koch, Stephen, *Double Lives: Spies and Writers in the Secret Soviet War of Ideas Against the West* (NY: The Free Press, 1994).

⁴⁸ Subak, *Op cit.*; USC 16114/3 (55), Joy's *Christian Register* article on Tempi, 4-1946.

⁴⁹ Marnham, Patrick, *Resistance and Betrayal: The Death and Life of the Greatest Hero of the French Resistance* (NY: Random House, 2000); *NYT* 6-1941.

⁵⁰ Subak, *Op city*, 102-3.

⁵¹ USC 16024/1 (14) 1-9-1941. Also, on Dolivet and his relation to American liberals. Cuhner, Ari Nathan, "Cold War Comrades: Left-Liberal Anti-communism and American Empire, 1941-1968." PHD Thesis, UC Santa Cruz, 2017).

⁵² Perry, N. Roland, *Last of the Cold War Spies : the Life of Michael Straight the Only American in Britain's Cambridge Spy Ring* (London: da Capo Press Persus Group, 2005).

⁵³ Marnham, *Op cit.*

⁵⁴ USC 16024/1 15, Brooks to Dexter 6-1941.

⁵⁵ USC 16024/1 15. USC 16114/3, 'Joy Report' on Brooks and Fry's efforts endangering Joy and the USC.

⁵⁶ Brooks, Howard, *Prisoners of Hope: Report on a Mission* (NY: L.B. Fischer, 1942).

⁵⁷ Subak, *Op cit.* 204 indicates that the trip probably included meetings with Leon Jouhaux, the resistance leader. Later, the OSS tried to send him large sums of money.

⁵⁸ Subak, *Op cit.*, 105.

⁵⁹ USC 16030/1 (23), 1-6-1942.

⁶⁰ USC 16024/1 (14), 16024/1 (9).

⁶¹ USC 16024/1 (14) 9-21-1041, 16136/1 (8).

⁶² Subak, *Op cit.*; Newhard, *Op cit.*; NARA RG220, on JAFRC and USC.

⁶³ USC 16114/3 (50) Dexter on the Fields. There have been accusations Noel had an affair Tempi.

⁶⁴ USC 16035/1 (11), 16024/4 (10); Di Figlia. *Op cit.*

⁶⁵ USC 16024/1 (15) 5-29-1941.

⁶⁶ USC 19114/2 5-1-1941.