
Hope College
Papers, 1904-2017. 7.75 linear ft.

Abstract

Labor leader and pacifist. Articles by and about Muste, clippings, exchange of letters with Irwin J. Lubbers concerning hiring a conscientious objector, tape of memorial service at Hope College, 1967; MS: “Abraham Johannes Muste, 1885-1967,” student paper by John Mulder ’67; “The Annual Muste Lecture,” by Jo Ann Robinson; letters of condolence; more articles and pamphlets by and about A. J. Muste; clippings, and extra copies of Liberation, a periodical edited by A. J. Muste; gift from John Muste; books from A. J. Muste’s library that bear his personal notes.

Accession No.: H88-0107
Provenance: Abraham Johannes Muste
Donor: Muste Estate
Photographs: 4 images (Box 1)
Processed by: Craig G. Wright, May 1991
                        Michael Douma, May 2002

Biography

Abraham Johannes Muste was born in Zierkzee, Zeeland, the Netherlands, in 1885. The family immigrated to America and settled in Grand Rapids in 1891. He was admitted to Hope Preparatory School in 1898, the youngest student at that time. He transferred to Hope College in 1902 and graduated after only three years at the age of twenty.

Muste was a very active student while at Hope. He won the Michigan state oratorical contest, edited the Anchor, captained the Flying Dutchman basketball teams, which won two state of Michigan championships, and was valedictorian of his graduating class of 1905.

The year 1909 was very important for Muste. That was when he graduated from the New Brunswick Theological Seminary, married Anna Huizenga in Rock Valley, Iowa, was ordained in the Reformed Church in America, and installed as first minister of the Fort Washington Collegiate Church in New York City.

Muste was the ultimate pacifist and protested against every major war of this century while he lived. He joined the Fellowship of Reconciliation, an inter-faith pacifist organization in 1916. In 1917, he resigned from the Central Congregational Church due to his pacifistic views, and the following year led the Lawrence, Massachusetts, textile workers strike. Among the many places he has protested are famous landmarks like Red Square in Moscow, the United Nations, Times Square, and the White House.

It is also telling that despite disappointment over his son’s desire to enlist in the Navy at the age of 17, Muste honored his son’s wishes and signed the enlistment papers.

Muste has had an impact on major figures in the peace movement and many called him the “American Gandhi.” The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. was a college student when he first heard Muste speak. The fact that the struggle for civil rights in this country has been so bloodless when compared to some other areas of the world is largely attributable to Muste.
In 1948, Muste stopped paying federal income tax due to the fact that they were used to finance the machineries of war. Every year he sent a package to the Internal Revenue Service containing the following items: a Bible, a copy of Henry Thoreau’s “Essay on Civil Disobedience,” and a three-page typewritten paper outlining the principles that prevented him from making a contribution to the armaments of the United States. It wasn’t until 1961 that the United States Tax Court ruled that the government had a right to back taxes but collection against Muste’s small retirement income was never attempted.

Muste passed away 1967.

Scope and Content

Personal library contains Muste’s marginalia and comments.

Container List

Box 1

Address by Muste, “The Church’s Responsibility for Peace: A Matter of Life and Death,” 1937
A. J. Muste Lecture Series
“A. J. Muste: An Historical Remembrance and Affirmation,” April 8, 1985
Clippings, 1987
Autobiography, Liberation Magazine, 1957
 Articles
Collum, Danny. “A.J.: His Life as Activist and Pacifist,” 1984
Danielson, Leilah.
Bibliography, n.d.
Dulles, John Foster. “Peace Without Platitudes,” 1942
Muste, A. J.
“Africa Against the Bomb,” 1960
“The Church in the Modern World,” 1938
“The Church’s Responsibility for Peace: A Matter of Life and Death,” 1937 (address to the General Synod of the RCA)
“Communism and Civil Liberties,” n.d.
“The Eisenhower - Khrushchev Talks,” 1959
“Getting Rid of War,” 1959
“Of Holy Disobedience,” 1952
“How to Deal With a Dictator,” 1954
“India and World Pacifism with notes about the H-bomb,” (report to membership of the Fellowship of Reconciliation), 1950
“Jesus and the Way to Peace,” n.d.
“John Sobieski,” 1903
“Korea: Spark to Set a World Afire?” 1950
“Neo-Gandian India,” 1953
“Non-Violence in an Aggressive World,” (excerpts) n.d.
“Not So Long Ago,” 1957-1960 (autobiography, parts 1-21 and 23)
“Now is the Appointed Time: Nuclear War and the Christian Family,” n.d.
“An Open Letter to Dr. Einstein,” n.d.
“Pacifism and Perfectionism: A Discussion of Some Neo-Orthodox Criticisms of Pacifism,” n.d.
“Pacifists and the 1960 Election Campaign,” 1960
“The Price of Moral Authority,” 1952
“The Problem of Discontent,” 1905
“Sabbath Observance,” (sermon), 1910
“To Save Democracy—Another War?” 1937
“Their Church and Ours,” 1958
“They Made it to Moscow,” 1961
“Total War or Total Pacifism?” n.d.
“An Urgent Note on the Greek-Turkish Issue: How to Stop Russia and Communism,” n.d.
“War is the Enemy,” n.d.
“The Way of the Cross,” 1938
“War is the Enemy,” n.d.
“What Would Pacifists Have Done About Hitler? A Discussion of War, Dictators, and Pacifism,” 1949
“Where Are We Going?” n.d.
“Who Is Now the Absolutist?” 1947
Reich, Wilhelm. “What is Class-Consciousness?” 1971
Robinson, Jo Ann Ooiman.
“A. J. Muste: Traveling Toward a Better World,” 1985
Whitney, Norman J. “Number One Pacifist,” 1967
Bibliographic Notes, n.d.
Biographical, n.d., 1904-2003
Clippings, n.d., 1928-1987 (scattered)
Correspondence
   General, n.d., 1917-1966 (scattered)
Death
   Condolences, 1967
   Eulogy by Dr. D. Ivan Dykstra, 1967
   Memorials, 1967
   Obituaries, 1967
Editorials
   “Senator Dodd, Norman Cousins, and SAVE,” December, 1960
   “Relaxation or Reshuffling?” December, 1959
Gandhi Quotes, 1925-1926, 1940-1944
Gram Udyog Patrika, (economic newsletter), v.16 no.7, July 1954
Notes, n.d., 1940, 1963
Photographs, n.d. (4 images)

Box 2

PERSONAL LIBRARY

   (BX9410 .B3 1954)
   (BJ1201 .B4 1955)
   (BR115 .A85 B4)
   (D168 .B779)
Butterfield, Herbert. Christianity and History. 1950. (BR115 .H5 B8 1950)
   (JX1395 .B87)
Cailliet, Emile. The Clue to Pascal. 1943. (BX4735 .P26 C3 1943)
Chase, Stuart. The Proper Study of Mankind...An Inquiry into the Science of Human
   Relations. 1948. (H91 .C5) (notes)
Cogley, John (ed.). Religion in America: Original Essays on Religion in a Free
Abraham J. Muste  
H88-0107

*Society.* 1958. (BR516 .C68)


Dallin, David J.  
*Russia & Postwar Europe.* 1943. (DK266 .D26) (notes) (reviews)  
*The Real Soviet Russia.* 1944. (DK267 .D185) (notes)


de Ligt, B. *Vrede Als Daad.* 2 vols. 1931, 1933. (Dutch) (notes)


Box 3

PERSONAL LIBRARY (cont.)

Friedell, Egon.  
*A Cultural History of the Modern Age: The Crisis of the European Soul From the Black Death to the World War.* 1930. (CB357 .F73)

Gilson, Etienne.  
*The Unity of Philosophical Experience.* 1937. (B72 .G5) (notes)


Hartshorne, Charles.  


Lyons, Eugene. *Assignment in Utopia*. 1937. (D413 .L9 A3)

Box 4

PERSONAL LIBRARY (cont.)

May, Rollo, PhD. *Man’s Search for Himself*. 1953. (BF67 .M39)
Muste, Abraham. *Non-Violence in an Aggressive World*. 1940 (H172.4 M978)
*Christian Realism and Political Problems*. 1953. (BR115 .P7 N5 1953) (notes)
Rattner, Joseph (ed.). *The Philosophy of John Dewey*. 1928. (B945 .D41 R2)
Rossi, A. *The Russo-German Alliance August 1939-June 1941*. 1951. (D754 .R9 R69 1951) (notes)
*Religion in 20th Century America.* 1952. (BR525 .S34)

Box 5

PERSONAL LIBRARY (cont.)

Schweitzer, Albert. (cont.)
*Out of My Life & Thought.* 1933. (CT1098 .S45 A282)
Sevareid, Eric. *Not so Wild a Dream.* 1946. (PN4874 .S3 A3)
Sorokin, Pitrim A., PhD. *The Sociology of Revolution.* 1925. (HM281 .S6 1925)
*The Reconstruction of Humanity.* 1948. (BJ1582 .S6x)
Spring, Howard. *And Another Thing...* 1946. (PR6037 .P68 A7) (notes)
Spykman, Nicholas John. *America’s Strategy in World Politics: The United States and the Balance of Power.* 1942. (E183.7 .S7) (notes)
Strauss, Patricia. *Bevin and Co.: The Leaders of British Labour.* 1941 (notes)
Swanwick, H. M. *Collective Insecurity.* 1937.
Tawney, R. H. *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism.* 1926. (BR115 .E3 T3 1926a)
Toynbee, Arnold J. *A Study of History.* vols. V and VI, 1940. (CB63 .T613 v.5 & v.6) (notes)
White, Morton. *Social Thought in America: The Revolt Against Formalism.* 1957. (H53.U5 W5 1957)

Box 6

PERSONAL LIBRARY (cont.)

Williams, Daniel Day. *God’s Grace and Man’s Hope*. 1949. (BR121 .W53)