



**Citizens for  
Global Solutions**, Minnesota  
Promoting global unity since 1947

March, 2017

Visit our website: <http://www.globalsolutionsmn.org>

**OUR VISION:** We envision a future in which countries work together to abolish war, protect universal human rights and freedoms, foster sustainable development, and solve related problems facing humanity that no country can solve alone. This vision requires the involvement of informed world citizens to create and maintain effective democratic global institutions that will supplant the law of force with the rule of law while respecting the diversity and autonomy of national and local communities.

**OUR MISSION:** We are a membership organization working to build political will, promoting global citizenship and a new spirit of sharing, and devising initiatives to promote our vision. We undertake our mission by organizing educational events, communicating global concerns to public officials, collaborating with globally engaged organizations, and disseminating proposals to reform and strengthen the United Nations and other international institutions, including the creation of new agencies when necessary.

## JOE SCHWARTZBERG'S 89<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2017



(B = Current Board member) seated from left: Dr. June Parrott, Dr. Joe Schwartzberg (B), Louise Pardee; Standing, Dick Bernard (B), Dr. Gail Hughes (President), Dennis Dillon (B), Jim Nelson, Nancy Dunlavy (B), Howard Dunlavy, Walid Issa (B). Board members missing: Roxanne Abbas, Margaret Esslinger, John Borgen, Dr. Bharat Parekh, Maryam Yusefzadeh, Kristi Rudelius-Palmer. The gathering was, as intended, a surprise for Joe. (June is a former Board member of Global Solutions MN, Jim Nelson is a former President of World Federalists Minnesota chapter, Howard Dunlavy has become the videographer for our Third Thursday programs, Louise is Joe's long-time partner and former CGS-MN president. Walid, a Palestinian raised in the Dehesha refugee camp in Bethlehem, had an Opinion piece on the Israel/Palestine situation published in the Star Tribune on February 14, 2017. To find it, go to <http://www.startribune.com>).

*Photo: Cathy Bernard*

# WEBSITE RESOURCES TO OFFER DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES ON THIRD THURSDAY FORUM TOPICS

By Gail Hughes, CGS-MN President

In earlier columns, I've highlighted the need to seek out diverse global perspectives on global problems and issues. Understanding diverse points of view is the first step needed for us to make informed decisions as global citizens.

Through our Third Thursday Forums, CGS-MN strives to bring speakers who may challenge the 'official stories' promoted by government officials and the mainstream media. Since we are now video-taping the Forums, you will be able to listen to or watch the talks if you aren't able to attend in person, or if you wish to review them again later. Although there will be a 'lag time' due to the need for basic editing, you will be able to find the videos on our new website ([www.globalsolutionsmn.org](http://www.globalsolutionsmn.org)).

While still in development, soon you can go to our website also to find articles that reflect diverse interpretations about the topics featured in our Forums. The articles will enable you to prepare for the Forums by reading about the topics in advance, and/or to learn more about the topics after the Forums are held.

We invite you to share these resources with others, and to add to our resources by letting us know of articles you find that may expand thinking about Forum topics. It is my hope that the website will eventually enable us to exchange ideas through responses to articles and talks, perhaps in the form of blogs or comments. Go to our website to find this and earlier newsletters and other items, as well.

## RETHINKING SOVEREIGNTY

By Joseph E. Schwartzberg

*excerpted from the recently-completed **Study and Discussion Guide** for Joe's book **Transforming the United Nations System: Designs for a Workable World**. The Guide will soon be available on the CGS-MN website.*

Article 2 of the UN Charter states: "*The Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members.*" Steadfast adherence to this principle, especially by nations that are politically weak, has proved to be a major impediment to Charter reform. But is this seemingly simple principle, originating with the 1648 Peace of Westphalia -- following Europe's devastating Thirty Years War and subsequently diffused by colonial powers throughout the world -- still optimal for our complex and interdependent planet? Our answer is certainly "no."

In fact, the meaning of sovereignty has been and remains the subject of heated debate. Who, for example, should be the legitimate holders of sovereignty? In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it was generally believed that monarchs ("sovereigns") ruled absolutely and by divine right. The American and French Revolutions, however, promoted the view that sovereignty belongs to the *people* and that all citizens were equal and entitled to equal rights. Of course, this lofty view differed – and still differs – from the current political reality. As a practical matter, the ability to exercise sovereignty (i.e., to govern) in most nations claiming to be democratic republics is constitutionally delegated to *legislators*, who may or may not exercise their powers freely.

In most of the world's nations, sovereignty is held exclusively by the central government, even though local governments may be granted the revocable power to legislate on many matters. But in twenty nations, those with federal constitutions, sovereignty is *irrevocably* divided between the central government and the nation's constituent territorial units (states, provinces, cantons, etc.), each exercising constitutionally delegated power to legislate in regard to specified issues. Many of the world's most powerful, populous, largest and/or diverse nations are federations: the USA, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Nigeria, Germany, Russia, India, Pakistan, Australia, etc. So, too, are several highly successful, but small, states, such as Switzerland. In total, federations account for 37% of the world's population, 46% of its GNI and 52% of its land area.

Whatever a nation's type of government may be – on a spectrum ranging from truly democratic to autocratic – the Westphalian system of sovereignty conveys to that nation the right to govern exclusively over a specifically bounded area. Attempts by outside agencies, including those of the United Nations system, to legally abridge this right (among others) are almost always considered unacceptable. Nations zealously seek to preserve their *unfettered* sovereignty. While the Westphalian system, at times, worked more or less well, present-day threats to global security and sustainability make it necessary for us to reconsider adherence to the idea of unfettered national sovereignty in the contemporary world.

*Schwartzberg essay continues on page 4*

# THIRD THURSDAY GLOBAL ISSUES FORUMS

Free and open to the public

6:45 – 8:45pm (unless otherwise noted)

Hennepin Ave. United Methodist Church, Longfellow Room

Go to [www.globalsolutionsmn.org](http://www.globalsolutionsmn.org) for event details and supplementary reading.

	<p><b>Thurs, MARCH 16</b></p> <p><b>Dr. Karen I. Shragg</b> environmentalist, educator, author, activist <b>“A CALL TO SOLVE OVER- POPULATION”</b></p>		<p><b>Thurs, APRIL 20</b></p> <p><b>Roger Prestwich</b> Chair, Committee on Foreign Relations Minnesota <b>“BREXIT”</b></p>
	<p><b>Thurs, MAY 18</b></p> <p><b>Daniel Wordsworth</b> President &amp; CEO, American Refugee Committee <b>“GLOBAL REFUGEE CRISIS”</b></p>		<p><b>Thurs, JUNE 15</b> <b>ANNUAL DINNER</b></p> <p><b>Nick Hayes</b> Professor of History &amp; University Chair in Critical Thinking, St. John’s University <b>“U.S./RUSSIA RELATIONS”</b></p>

## OTHER CGS-MN EVENTS OF SPECIAL NOTE ...

**WORLD LAW DAY, MONDAY, MAY 1, 5:30 P.M. GANDHI MAHAL, MINNEAPOLIS MN**

**Shawn Otto**, [www.shawnotto.com](http://www.shawnotto.com), founder of <http://sciencedebate.org> and author of *“War on Science: Who’s Waging It, Why It Matters and What We Can Do About It”* will speak on the topic **“Science, Law and the Quest for Freedom in the Age of Trump”** at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual World Law Day Symposium Monday May 1, sponsored by CGS-MN. Mr. Otto is well known and highly respected in the scientific and arts communities. World Law Day was an innovation of the Minnesota World Federalists in 1963, and was an annual program for over 30 years; it was reinitiated as an annual program in 2013. **Reservations required for this event, which includes dinner. Cost \$25. Reservations/more info: Dick Bernard (see address panel on this newsletter.)** Book can be ordered at Shawn Ottos’s website (above) or through [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) or [www.milkweed.org](http://www.milkweed.org).

It’s not public yet, but we have advance word that **“THE WORLD IS MY COUNTRY”**, the amazing true story of World Citizen #1, **Garry Davis**, has been accepted for the 2017 Minneapolis St. Paul Film Society International Film Festival, which runs **APRIL 13-29**. Exact show date is unknown at newsletter deadline, but will likely be later April, 2017. Information about the film, including a preview, can be seen at <http://www.theworldismycountry.com/>. Film society website is <http://mspfilm.org/>. CGS-MN is an early supporter of *The World Is My Country*, and co-sponsored an early preview in 2013. The 90-minute film is complete and very interesting. Visit our website for more details. <http://globalsolutionsmn.org/>

## **Citizens for Global Solutions, Minnesota**

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*“When the people lead, the leaders will follow”*

York Langton, early leader in Minnesota United Nations and World Federalists

### ***Schwartzberg, “Rethinking Sovereignty”, Continued from page 2***

Although the Westphalian system *theoretically* empowers nations to control the flow of people, goods, services, money and ideas across their borders, in *practice* they do so rather poorly. Ways are almost always found to enable laundered money, migrants, black market merchandise, drugs, sex trafficking, propaganda, armaments, and other “bads” to evade government regulations. Additionally, behind-the-curtain influence peddling often enables agents of foreign governments and powerful and unscrupulous multi-national companies to influence national policies in profoundly undesirable ways.

## **A THOUGHT TOWARDS A BETTER WORLD**

By Dick Bernard, Vice-President, GlobalSolutionsMn.org

Those who read this newsletter most likely have an interest in the importance of positive international relationships. The results of the 2016 American elections are concerning. “Make America Great Again” (MAGA), as it is interpreted over and over, does not seem to mean, as the late Sen. Paul Wellstone said “we all do better when we all do better”. MAGA quite clearly means, to the victors, “I won, you lost”.

What to do, ongoing? I have always resonated to the famous quotation of Margaret Mead: *“Never believe that a few caring people can't change the world. For, indeed, that's all who ever have.”*

Take the group pictured on the front page of this newsletter, and the others listed below the photo who couldn't attend. There are 17 in all. We are all “caring people”, and as we know, we don't always agree with each other, but in our separate ways we have done and are doing significant things to make this a better world.

Some weeks ago I was doing a “what if” exercise in my head while driving a lonely road in rural Minnesota. “What if” each person who voted for the losing presidential candidate in 2016 (about 66,000,000) committed to doing one additional positive action each week, focused towards a better world. Such an admittedly grandiose idea would result in almost 3 ½ BILLION actions in a year. Tens of millions didn't vote at all – add them and there is an even more formidable force. I'm trying to do my part. How about you?