



Citizen of the World Davis: "I'm no martyr or hero."



BLACK STAR

One young man asked if he should go to war.

Young Man of the World

By DAVID SCHOENBRUN

ONE day last February, Garry Davis, the astonishing, 27-year-old self-proclaimed Citizen of the World, found his way blocked by a Paris street barricade erected to catch a car thief. A tough-looking gendarme thrust his head through the window of Davis' auto and gruffly demanded: "Papers, please."

Davis paled. In a continent where official papers are a part of you, he hasn't a single one. He has renounced his own country, the United States, and has refused to accept anything less than official recognition as world citizen. Since no world government exists this is quite impossible.

The policeman frowned menacingly at Davis' failure to produce any cards. Then, suddenly, delighted recognition swept across his face. "Why," he shouted, "it's *le petit homme!* Greetings, citizen, you may proceed!"

Davis' success with the usually hard and cynical Paris gendarmerie is a key to his appeal to the scattered citizens of a hard, cynical and desperately worried world. Since the day less than a year ago when he tore up his U. S. citizenship papers and literally camped on the United Nations' doorstep this carrot-topped ex-bomber pilot in a worn flying jacket has captured the fancies of men as diversified as Bill Carter, a New York prize fighter, and Albert Einstein, the scientist. Carter has lettered "One World" on the back of the robe he wears in the ring. Einstein has wired Davis, urging him to keep right on exemplifying the Little Man.

Twenty-five thousand letters have poured in to Davis' tiny monastic room in the seedy Montparnasse hotel where he makes his headquarters, applauding him for his stand or asking further

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Davis won't call it a "movement" but he has 25,000 followers in Germany.



"It's painful to be a policeman," said the gendarme.

questions about his opinions. Sixty thousand persons have applied for registration as world citizens on the Davis pattern. Many letters are addressed simply "Garry Davis, Citizen of the World, Paris."

In just 10 months this son of a society band leader and onetime actor in a Danny Kaye Broadway musical has made himself a universal symbol of the Little Man. His one ambition is to make people world-minded. Already, with the blessings of France, he is planning a World People's Constituent Assembly for World Government for the summer of 1950.

Gets Letters From Canada

WHEN Davis first announced that his International Registry of World Citizens was ready to inscribe members letters poured into his hotel at 1,000 a day, almost swamped the local post-office. Now his mail has settled down to a steady 500 a day. They come from Togoland and Tangiers, China, Malaya, the U. S., Canada, Brazil and Libya. They come from Moroccan lead miners and Kentish coal miners, students at Zurich university and professors at Princeton. Letters slip under the Iron Curtain at about 50 a week and Davis and his helpers are adding an Eastern European section to their five other letter sections: Spanish, English, French, Scandinavian and German. Canadian mail runs about 100 letters a week and is increasing.

Obscure and famous men and women have sprung spontaneously to Garry Davis' side like iron filings to a magnet. He has about 25,000 followers in Germany, although he says he doesn't want followers at all, just world citizens. In that dismembered and disheartened country 500 "Welt-burger" clubs have sprung up. One Austrian actress boasts she's been appointed the first World Citizen of Austria by Davis himself on the strength of an early registration letter.

Messages of approval have come from Nobel prize winner Harold Urey, physicist; Leah Manning, British M.P., and Sir John Boyd Orr, British food expert. His permanent Council of Solidarity, a sort of Garry Davis brain trust, is composed of 26 distinguished writers, painters,

scientists, journalists and parliamentarians, including the American novelist Richard Wright ("Native Son"), Nobel prize winner Andre Gide, Albert Camus, French writer ("The Plague"), painter Jean Helion and Professor Pierre Girard, director of the Institute of Biology.

The man who started this movement concentrates on the Little Man angle. He has a wavy shock of red-blond hair, a long and pensive face and an almost Chaplinesque little man's defiance of authority. He always wears his leather flight jacket, with a faded pin-up girl dancing in the cracked paint on the back. Frenchmen sometimes hail him as "The Don Quixote of Peace." It's significant that the only movie he has seen in four months is an old one: "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington," the story of a little man's successful fight against governmental status quo.

Despite his undoubted dramatic sense and his show-business background, he isn't flashy dramatic. He is slow-speaking, deliberate, often serious. He

knows how to use symbols: the simple uniform, the sensational act of renouncing citizenship, the camping out on the UN grounds. Yet these things all seem to have happened to Garry Davis without his appearing to have caused them. He has the extraordinary ability to make it seem as though somebody got him into the whole fix—probably the supreme gift of the greatest type of showman.

Yet he quietly tipped off newsmen and newsreel cameramen, including United Nations spotlight operators, that he would invade the gallery of the Chaillot Theatre during the General Assembly and attempt to make a speech from the balcony. When he got up to make his bid he signaled with his hand and the spotlights focused on him while the cameras ground.

Seven years ago Davis was just another chorus boy in the Broadway show "Let's Face It." His father, Meyer Davis, is still society's favorite band leader and veteran of many a White House reception. Garry flitted about *Continued on page 52*

Davis, an ex-hooper, understands the value of symbols in showmanship.



Ever since Garry Davis camped at UN's door with a sleeping bag and an ideal he has been a knight or a nut to thousands

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Young Man of the World

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New York's café society, where he had a reputation as a junior playboy. He chose show business in preference to college after a year at the Carnegie Institute School of Dramatics.

Then came the Army and six daylight missions over Germany as pilot of the Flying Fortress "Calamity Jane." He crash-landed in Sweden on his seventh mission when hit by flak, was interned, escaped after three months and became pilot instructor until demobilization.

After the war he tried the stage again and was offered a chance most hoofers would have jumped at: understudy to Ray Bolger in "Three to Make Ready." But the war had changed him. "I knew there was no longer any such thing as a normal life," he recalls. "The feeling of disillusion grew in me slowly. It was a steady process, not an overnight explosion. For two years I suffered a growing sense of frustration." He began to read about the world-government ideas of Cord Meyer, Jr., Carl Van Doren and Thomas K. Finletter (now Marshall Plan Chief of Mission for the U. K.). But he felt there was too much talk, too little action. "I wanted to dramatize world government and relate it to the individual by demonstrating what happens to a man without a country in this world of sovereign states."

Garry Davis decided to act.

Told to Leave France

He chose France as the place where he would make his move. It was a choice of purest inspiration, the birthplace of the Rights of Man, bastion of individualism, with its capital Paris, traditional refuge for the dispossessed, a centre of western culture, open-minded, excitable, intellectually curious, and one of the few countries in the world whose constitution provides for the relinquishing of national sovereignty to a supranational world authority.

Paris and a piece of paper brought world attention to Garry Davis. The piece of paper was his passport that he handed in to the U. S. Embassy in Paris on May 25, 1948, with that grave act renouncing American citizenship and becoming a problem child for the Paris police.

Davis was now stateless and paperless, and the latter is the more outrageous conduct for French officialdom. His visa for residence in France was technically in force until Sept. 11, but the passport on which the visa was granted no longer existed. This was fine for Garry, for it dramatized the plight of the individual trapped in a world of investigations, barriers and cold-hearted bureaucrats.

One of those bureaucrats, in the absence of instructions from above, informed Davis that he must leave France on Sept. 11. Without papers, however, Davis could not get a visa to enter any other country. He could presumably be put on a boat at a French Atlantic port and spend the rest of his life at sea working his eternal passage on a tramp steamer.

Then he had an inspiration. The French Government had just turned over the Palais de Chaillot to the United Nations as the Assembly Hall for the Paris session, had declared it to be a temporary international enclave, so that, technically, the buildings, and the Place du Trocadero approaches to them, were no longer French territory.

Garry Davis wrapped up his army

sleeping bag, his typewriter and an extra shirt and left France by the simple expedient of stepping off the sidewalk of the Avenue du President Wilson and striding over to the centre of the open square. The next morning Paris woke up to find it had a Citizen of the World, camping out in the shadow of the Eiffel Tower.

His appeal was sure-fire. Impulsive Parisians flocked by the hundreds to his "office" on the steps of the administration building in the centre of the Place, bringing him jam, bananas, warm socks, specially hand-knitted for him, books, and even one de luxe jar of lobster meat from a dowager lady of Passy.

The French police stood by. He was no responsibility of theirs. The first night on the steps Garry curled up out in the open on the cement floor and slept soundly. As I drove up with a few other newsmen to find out just what was happening, a hard-bitten "flic" rushed over, lifted his white riot stick to his lips and whispered: "Silence, messieurs, the Citizen of the World sleeps."

It was there, from the steps facing the Palais de Chaillot, that Garry Davis first spoke to the world through the press and radio, expounding his ideas, launching his campaign for peace through world federal government. His "movement" was born on those Trocadero Heights, overlooking the Seine; there his first followers rallied around him.

Whatever becomes of Garry Davis and the ideal of world government it will always be identified with this Place du Trocadero, which already has its place in history. (A few yards away Benjamin Franklin flew his famous kite.)

For six days and nights Davis lived on the UN doorstep, holding open-air press conferences on the broad Chaillot esplanade. His views were simply and forcefully expressed: "Rival nationalisms are again threatening to war upon each other and drag the world down to destruction. The UN is powerless to act. It cannot promulgate international laws because it is not a government and only government can make law and keep order. The UN is only a smoke screen obscuring the grave truth that the world is torn by anarchy."

"Only World Government"

On the question of the Soviet-American cold war Davis said: "People are worried about the disagreements between the Soviet Union and the United States. What they should worry about is the area of agreement, not disagreement. The real peril is that the two great powers have an unwritten, unexpressed but nonetheless implicit understanding on their respective zones of influence. The quarrel is on the limitation of these rival spheres. Only world government can end this dangerous division of the world."

Davis on the U. S.: "I did not renounce my citizenship as a protest against the United States. I love my country dearly. I would have done the same had I been a Frenchman or a Russian or an Englishman. My protest is against narrow nationalism which has always resulted in war and death."

The six days he camped out and answered all comers helped clarify his own ideas, many of them fuzzy and unformed by his own admission. He kept insisting, and still does, that he has no intention of heading a "movement," that he subscribes to no formal political doctrine, that his sole aim is to rally masses of people to the idea of world federalism. Federalism is a key word for Davis.

He thinks of the first world government as a federation of states that surrender some sovereignty to the federal government while preserving full authority in purely local affairs. Says Davis: "If a resident of Houston can be both a loyal Texan and a loyal American, then a Parisian can be a good Frenchman and a good citizen of the world."

Then UN legal experts decided they had no authority to grant him world citizenship and on the afternoon of Sept. 17 some hundred Paris policemen came to cart him away. As they took down his pup tent and hustled him off to a riot squad car they looked grim and unhappy. One *agent de police*, standing by in case of trouble, told me why they looked so grim: "We like 'the little man.' He wants peace. And who doesn't? It is painful to be a policeman!"

Inside the police van Garry talked of his ideas for a world police force to his interested captors. As they hustled Garry into the inspector's office one policeman leaned over and asked: "Tell me, citizen, how much will they pay the world policeman?"

He Draws a Crowd

Davis stayed in the news. He got headlines when he tried to make his unscheduled speech from the balcony of the Palais de Chaillot Theatre where the UN was still meeting. As the guards pounced on him and carried him off shouting, Colonel Robert Sarrazac, one of his advisers, strategically sitting at the other end of the hall, got up and delivered the address in French while delegates gasped in surprise on the floor. (Davis himself has only a smattering of French.) The spotlights turned unerringly on Sarrazac. A hero of the French Maquis, he is editor of a page called "Peuple de Monde" which appears in the Paris morning paper "Combat" (Independent Socialist) twice a month giving news of the Davis phenomenon. Sarrazac is one of the members of the 26-man Council of Solidarity which acts as guardian and adviser to Davis, helps arrange his public appearances and lends the prestige of its individual members.

Davis has had two successful public meetings, one bringing out 5,000 Parisians who tried to jam into the 2,500-seat Salle Pleyel concert hall. A request for contributions brought a storm of 100,000 francs. A second rally scheduled rashly in the mammoth Velodrome d'Hiver that only a De Gaulle or a Thorez can fill on short notice, brought out an amazing crowd of 12,000 enthusiastic supporters.

By Christmas, 1948, Davis had unquestionably arrived, and announced the drafting of a special card for world citizens, which will be distributed to anyone who will pledge his faith in world government and promise to vote in the 1950 election for a People's Constituent Assembly. The People's Assembly is not Davis' idea but he approves it completely. Principal architect of the Assembly plan is

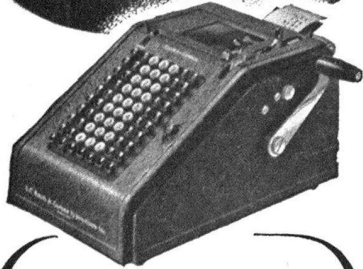
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Answers to AT HOME ON THE RANGE

(See Quiz on page 49)

1. Broom.
2. Measuring spoons.
3. Ladle strainer.
4. Egg slicer.
5. Cake form.
6. Sink sponge.

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Continued from page 52
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Davis has no illusions about such an assembly becoming a world government overnight. He hopes that a sufficiently large popular registration and vote will convince sceptics of the deep roots of the world government idea, will give it new moral credit in the eyes of the world.

Davis lives and makes his headquarters at the Hotel des Etats Unis (whose owner hopes to change the name to "Hotel of the United States of the World") on the Boulevard de Montparnasse. It is one of those obscure, grease-stained creaky lodgings that usually shelter sad-eyed men from Eastern Europe. The odor of fried potatoes and the stale but still acrid bite of coarse French cigarettes crawls up your nostrils as you enter. Guttural Polish echoes up from the dark corners of the gloomy hall.

A poster on the wall announces that this is headquarters for "Garry Davis et ses Camarades." The Davis trademark—a huge yellow circle that appears on all his printed material, stands out on the sign. On the first floor is Room 5—general reception room of the Davis group. Thirty to 40 visitors a day squeeze up the corkscrew staircase to this room.

Davis himself lives in Room 29, a narrow cubicle just wide enough to stretch your arms in, just three strides long from door to window. A bunch of red artificial holly bound with bright green ribbon is tied around the bars of the bed. It is all that is left of a Christmas package from Garry Davis' mother and it is the one colorful, human touch in the whole ascetic chamber, with its one rickety bridge table, its battered armchair and its empty CARE package-waste-basket.

"Monk in Flight Jacket"

Davis spends most of his time in this room. (One of his most vocal critics, Jean Dannemuller, commentator for L'Aube, the Christian Democrat paper, calls him: "The monk in the flight jacket.")

He's up at 7.30, gulps his *café au lait* over the New York Times, which he gets free, and the Paris edition of the Herald Tribune, which he buys. He reads letters until 11 a.m. He naturally doesn't read them all. They are screened and the most significant are passed along to him. He answers the most urgent. He also writes speeches, messages, newspaper articles. The day I saw him he was wrestling with a BBC talk.

One significant letter on Jan. 27 came from a young man named Jan Ruyter. Ruyter was born in Holland, raised in Romania, took his high schooling in India and has just arrived in the U. S. from Bombay via Europe. His problem: if war comes along world citizens will have to join their respective armies. Should they or should they not?

Davis replied: "Consult your own conscience. I cannot advise you on your present responsibilities beyond asking you to work for world government . . . Personally I am not a pacifist in the narrow sense of the word. I believe in . . . law and order which implies the use of force. I believe that a world police force . . . will prevent total war and mass destruction."

From 11 to noon Davis holds a "staff meeting," then lunches in the bistro off the lobby and returns for another session with the mail at 2 p.m. He sees visitors until 4, then holds an executive meeting with his chief associates, Sarrazac, Russ Benedict, his publicity

man, and Madame Marcault, his chief letter screener. This capsule brain trust decides broad policy questions. Davis makes the final decision.

After dinner Davis studies. He reads the papers and books earmarked for his education. Main literary influences: Emery Reeves "Anatomy of Peace"; Philip Wylie's "Generation of Vipers"; Ayn Rand's "The Fountainhead"; Lloyd Douglas' "The Robe"; Cord Myer, Jr.'s "Peace or Anarchy"; Arnold Toynbee's "Study of History."

Sister Will Help Him

His father and mother were dead set against his decision to renounce his citizenship but have become reconciled to it, even proud of him now. Meyer Davis carries press clippings, shows them to everybody. His kid sister Margie, aged 18 and just out of high school, plans to come to Paris and work for him this summer. Davis draws no salary but gets a small allowance from his family (roughly \$20 a week) which pays his rent (\$20 a month) and meals (\$1.65 a day).

The attitudes to Davis are divided. U. S. Government officials in Paris are furious with him. They tried to argue him out of his renunciation and the embassy officials I talked to think him a hopeless dreamer, an unwitting Communist tool, a pest and potential troublemaker. They've washed their hands of him. On the other hand, French officials like him. The President of the Republic, Vincent Auriol, received him cordially. Herbert Evatt, the UN's doughty, eminently realistic chairman, wrote him a pleasant personal message, while officially turning down his request for a special session to debate world government.

Conservative French spokesmen who object to Davis (most prominent: Francois Mauriac, Catholic writer in Le Figaro) point out that only the western world has the freedom of expression that will give Davis' ideas circulation—thus, the western world may be divided against itself under Davis' prodding, while the Iron Curtain countries remain solid. Again by condemning *all* nationalism, Davis is said to be guilty of "putting America and Russia in the same sack," of diverting public attention from the pressing need to organize an Atlantic Pact and western defense, and of failing to point out that Russia is the force threatening the world.

Davis' critics also point out that the Communists began by blasting Garry Davis as a fool but suddenly soft-pedaled and now leave him untouched in the pages of their press.

Davis replies: "Any positive action toward realizing the condition of world peace, that is a democratic world government, runs the risk of condemnation for undermining the will of the western world to organize its defense against Soviet expansion and Communist sabotage. This condemnation comes principally from naïve optimists who cling to the hope of real progress amidst international anarchy. The only defense today for any nation is elimination of war itself. The people have sensed this both in the East and in the West."

Davis says the Communists are afraid that a truncated world government, without participation of the Soviet Union, would be a western bloc directed against Russia. He believes that the fear of the Communists and the fear of the conservatives cancel themselves out and prove that his way is a middle way, a mass move for peace that will ultimately exert irresistible pressure on all governments, even the most absolute.

As to charges of communism, he

laughs that off. Most of the members of his council are liberals and socialists. The most extreme left wingers are men like Vercors and Martin-Chauffier who believe in socialist-communist co-operation and have appeared many times on Communist-sponsored platforms. But neither of these two men are "orthodox" and both are regarded with suspicion by the Communists, even when they are glad to use them as props or fronts for Communist campaigns.

The official Communist party line, printed in the Jan. 1 issue of France Nouvelle, regarded as an organ of the party, runs like this: do not ignore the tremendous desire for peace of the masses that expresses itself in many forms, one of them the Garry Davis movement. There are, of course, Anglo-American agents and warmongers in the Davis camp, working undercover and trying to confuse the people by masking the warlike aims of the West under an idealistic and artificial pacifism. The role of the Communist is to expose these manoeuvres; but do not attack the sincerity of Davis personally nor of the many honest people who follow him, or else you risk offending great masses of people who ardently desire peace. Try to channel them away from the propagandists and try to show that only America desires war whereas the Soviet Union is the champion of peace. Pay no support to the idea of world government but make every possible use of the yearning for peace that is behind this idea.

Garry Davis is sensitive to accusations of being "a tool of the Communists" or, on the other hand, "a tool of the warmongers." I suspect that his sensitivity arises from an inward confusion about political theory. I have had many long talks with Garry since the day I first met him on the Trocadero steps. His political education is haphazard, with great gaps. I don't think Garry knows exactly what communism is, or capitalism, for that matter. He has only the very fuzziest notion of what the nature of world government should be.

He says that this is no concern of his, other than a recognition that the form of government should be democratic. Even here he cannot give an answer to the problem posed by the many definitions of democracy that exist, and the practice of so many statesmen from Stalin and Truman through Queuille, Atlee and Peron to claim that their form of democracy is the best.

Davis refuses to allow his own confusion or the complexities of future developments to divert him from his fixed course, the attainment of mass support for world government.

He looked at me wistfully when I asked if he did not sometimes think about his personal future, I said a little harshly: "Little man, where do you go from here?"

He turned to the window and watched the traffic on the bustling Boulevard du Montparnasse and then replied softly:

"I have the same dreams and desires as any man my age. I don't want to be a martyr or a hero. But this thing is deep inside of me. There isn't room for anything else now. I'm heading down a one-way street." ★

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