

In Appreciation of Jeremy J. Stone

by

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Jeremy was a character larger than life, even among the giants with whom he interacted. Fortunately, he wrote his own record in many of the FAS Public Interest Reports (PIR), in his 1999 book, *“Every Man Should Try”*¹ and in a document of this decade, *“Defending Civilization Using Catalytic Ideas.”*²

My first correspondence³ with Jeremy involved the U.S. government program to develop a commercial Supersonic Transport aircraft. However, we may well have met in Cambridge, in connection with the “Doty Group,” a.k.a. the Soviet-American Disarmament Study (SADS) group, headed by Paul Doty of Harvard and by Mikhail D. Millionshchikov, Vice President of the Soviet Academy of Sciences.

As recounted in *“Every Man ...”* Jeremy’s first independent venture involved a great idea that arose from his work at RAND and then at Herman Kahn’s Hudson Institute. Jeremy perceived that if the Soviet Union did not build an ABM system of long-range interceptor missiles (“Tallinn System”) the Americans could commit to not building what would be a much larger and more effective ABM system, and the world would be more secure. This was a new idea, and Jeremy’s position at the Hudson Institute permitted him to flesh it out.

The Doty Group had the good sense to offer Jeremy \$1000 to use his paper in the SADS discussions, to which Jeremy assented, but he complains that Doty only reluctantly agreed to the demand that Jeremy present the paper himself. At the meeting in late Spring 1964, Jeremy did so and hit it off with the Russians. Vasily Emelyanov advised him that he had learned English in his sixties in the back of a chauffeur-driven limousine, and Jeremy would benefit by learning Russian. Jeremy thought this such a good idea that he encouraged his wife B.J. to spend a lot of time in formal study of Russian (as she later did, to a lesser extent, with Chinese) to forward Jeremy’s independent style of activism in arms control.

Jeremy writes, *“My last effort was to see if the group could help me spend a year in Moscow, in residence, working on arms control. But Doty was characteristically aloof and noncommittal, and I could not figure out where I stood. Accordingly, by the summer of 1966, I had decided to become my own individual Pugwash movement.”* And so he and B.J. moved to Moscow! Jeremy was irreversibly launched on his unique trajectory in arms control.

¹ At <https://web.archive.org/web/20170106173330/http://catalytic-diplomacy.org/miscPDFs/EveryManShouldTry-FullBook.pdf>

² At <https://web.archive.org/web/20170106173330/http://catalytic-diplomacy.org/miscPDFs/CatalyticDiplomacy-FullBook.pdf>

³ Ultimately I worked with Jeremy on the Board of the FAS, and as head of its educational arm while Frank von Hippel was serving in OSTP. Thu, as Vice Chairman of FAS and Chairman of the FAS Fund I stood in for Frank in bringing to fruition his plan to convene a very small meeting in Shanghai, with a mere four persons each from China, India, the United States, and Pakistan, with the goal of reducing the likelihood of nuclear war. [https://fas.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/9_Garwin_PIR-Article_finalWEB.pdf and <http://faspir.fas.org/pir0494.html>]

After “retiring” in 1966 to teach mathematics at Pomona, Jeremy found his calling in Washington, with FAS, where he was a fount of innovation, combining wide knowledge of questions of public policy with an active interest in technical matters, and a penchant for operationalizing his concepts and proposals. He thought about motivation and how best to present his arguments, with a penchant for distilling the essence for communication and persuasion.

Jeremy was also, at times, devious, when he felt it could advance his policy goals—a property I did not share, and one that led to conflict between us.

Twenty years ago, I was much touched by Jeremy’s foresight and concern for my own wellbeing, evidenced by his offer to help to move me and my wife, Lois, to Washington, in view of our even-then advancing age. And one of the best parts of my interaction with Jeremy was the rare contact with B.J., who was an unalloyed delight.

Following the publication of his book in 1999, I had little more to do with Jeremy, after I was severely critical of his pursuit of Phil Morrison as the supposed Los Alamos spy, Perseus⁴.

This obsession with Phil Morrison as Perseus is an inexplicable flaw in Jeremy’s life and accomplishments. Jeremy himself wrote⁵, “I believe that truth heals all. As Mahatma Gandhi once put it in a postcard to a friend of his, ‘For me, the whole of philosophy is summed up in truth at any cost.’” I think Jeremy would condone, if not applaud, giving wider circulation to his somewhat muted conclusion of his quest for Perseus, as I will now recount.

In preparing these remarks, I reread carefully Jeremy’s Ch. 29⁶, where I found, before the text of the chapter, the statement,

Author’s Note: Since the publication of this chapter in 1999, I have become persuaded that the spy Perseus never, in fact, existed.
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None of Jeremy’s friends or colleagues of whom I inquired before this session, had known of this note⁷. What a tragedy, and what insight the Chapter offers into the obsession of a fertile mind! No small part of the tragedy is that, with the publication of Chapter 29 in 1999, Jeremy cut himself off from many friends and colleagues, including myself, who would have been eager to resume their friendship if they had known that Jeremy had recanted this fantasy.

⁴ Chapter 29, “*Unfinished Business: Atomic Espionage in World War II (The Time to Tell the Truth)*” P. 324 (pdf p. 340)

⁵ “*Every Man Should Try...*” pdf p. 357.

⁶<https://web.archive.org/web/20170106173330/http://catalytic-diplomacy.org/everymanPDFs/Ch29.pdf>, dated 10/3/08; It is not evident when after October, 2008, this note was added; it could have been as recently as 2016.

⁷(It is not clear when this Author’s Note was added to the stand-alone Ch. 29 on the Catalytic Diplomacy website; it has only now been added by Steve Aftergood to Chapter 29 in the pdf of the FullBook on that site.); At the memorial session, May 1, Michael Mann told me that Jeremy had long ago expressed to him the conclusion contained in the “Author’s note,” and his intention to add this to the Chapter. Michael also confirmed that Jeremy rejected the suggestion that he discuss this point directly with others.

Jeremy's great accomplishments far outweigh this bizarre episode and are too numerous to discuss here. To some extent, Jeremy was the Wizard of Oz in the FAS as he rebuilt it from almost nothing in 1970 to the "idea factory" it soon became, with most of the ideas his own! Jeremy thought big, but realized that achieving his goals required very detailed hard work, which he provided.

A major instance is the opening of the United States to China, in which Jeremy played a key role, and which I was able to observe as both a member of the FAS Board and of the National Academy of Science's (NAS) Committee on Scholarly Communication with the People's Republic of China. Jeremy's ingenuity, tenacity, and activism were key to bringing to the United States a visiting delegation of Chinese scientists sent abroad by the PRC government to scout the way to environmental improvement for China. I played a calming role in quieting internecine warfare between FAS and NAS and managed to get IBM to sponsor the week's visit of the Chinese delegation to the New York area, where they were received at universities and industrial scientific laboratories. This began my own involvement with China, especially in arms control, beginning with a month-long trip in March-April 1974.

A lesser but still illuminating contribution by Jeremy was his recognition of the long-distance sonic booms from the routine flights of the Concorde SST from Europe to Dulles International Airport. Having noticed a correlation between the time of the Concorde's takeoff from Heathrow Airport in London and mysterious sonic-boom-like sounds felt along the east coast of Canada and the United States, Jeremy persuaded a reluctant me to develop a crude theory of such sonic booms that showed that they occurred as the downward-propagating sonic booms were reflected from the surface of the ocean, traveled through the entire atmosphere to the thermosphere, where they were refracted by the increasing velocity of sound and descended again to the surface of the Earth, traveling along with the aircraft as it cruised at a speed of Mach 2.0 at an altitude of 18 km.

This was an interesting curiosity, a nice exercise, but did not add much to the case we were making against commercial supersonic aircraft-- for reasons of economics, airport noise, and unacceptable direct sonic boom in overland flight.

In his books, Jeremy recounts the story of his life and accomplishments more fully and clearly than we can do here. I urge you to read these memoirs to appreciate the scope and the depth of his contributions.