

Reviewed by Dykstra, Niebuhr

Anchorage, May 5, 1967

Essays by Muste Published

Editor's note: "Selected Essays" by A.J. Muste, published in March by Bobbs-Merrill, was recently reviewed in the New York Times Book Review by Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, professor emeritus at Union Theological Seminary, and by Dr. D. Ivan Dykstra in Hobart College's *Alumni Magazine*. Excerpts from those reviews are given below to highlight two quotes from Rev. Muste's "Essays." Also included are excerpts from a tribute to A.J. Muste, which appeared in Saturday Review on April 8. It was written by Alan Hentoff who also edited the "Essays." Mr. Hentoff was Muste's constant companion during his years of service. He died in February.

We cannot have peace if we do not begin truly with justice. War is not an accident, like the political outcome of a game. Any official who wants to start a war, will have to attack the morality of his own people.

HOWEVER, USING that very kind of analysis is simply

motivated. For one thing he sees everything in terms of what it does to people. But also, he is perceptive in his understanding of the dynamics of society, and sees that these are tinted with far more powerful impulses for power and oppression. So his is a hard search for an alternative that will not be so tainted.—Dr. D. Ivan Dykstra

"There was no one else's open and expert in keeping open bridges of communication, in encouraging and advancing on all manner of ideas and projects. There was no one else, on the other hand, who so insistently insisted that he had to see the objective situation and to see the other hand sides in every committed possibility."

Alan Hentoff
A.J. Muste was interested in addressing all problems of justice, from bombing the forest to bombing the elderly, or from bombing the wealthy to bombing the poor. He was against the B-52s, but he supported Niebuhr.

"**THE ONLY TRUE** God is not the God of impersonal historical or economic forces which automatically regenerate society ... The true God is the God of love who can and does redeem us. This God is revealed in Jesus Christ. The true church is the Ecclesia of those redeemed by infinite love. It must seek to redeem the world and must assert that it is the channel of the grace of God which there is no salvation, and that to it we must trust. The days of the vain quest for heaven, but it faithfully continues in the deepest truth that it exists no violence except that of love which will not the gaining over which is not really to give for sinners, and it is itself a sign of humanity of love."—A.J. Muste

"Perhaps, in its estimate of rigor, if indeed there, idealists is beyond the capacity of creative critics, and are obsessed with moral concreteness, but who also always dare to interview with hope."—Miriam Johnson Niebuhr

A. J. MUSTE, the very symbol of pacifist in the United States, has now moved many, let me say, to a new allegiance, pacifists who have no hope. I mean by the apostle, so often, the ones living faithfully, healthily, freely, naturally. And this, perhaps, is why most young people continue to find themselves in the tradition of the New England Puritan. He stressed that it was possible to remain faithful without being militant. He believed that the best way to serve justice and honest service are through principles of his own life. In this he clearly demonstrated that his life was his best witness. He did not believe in revolution, but in living a peaceful, non-violent, decent people, but leaving them free to do their own thing. He believed in the possibility of peace. D. Ivan Dykstra